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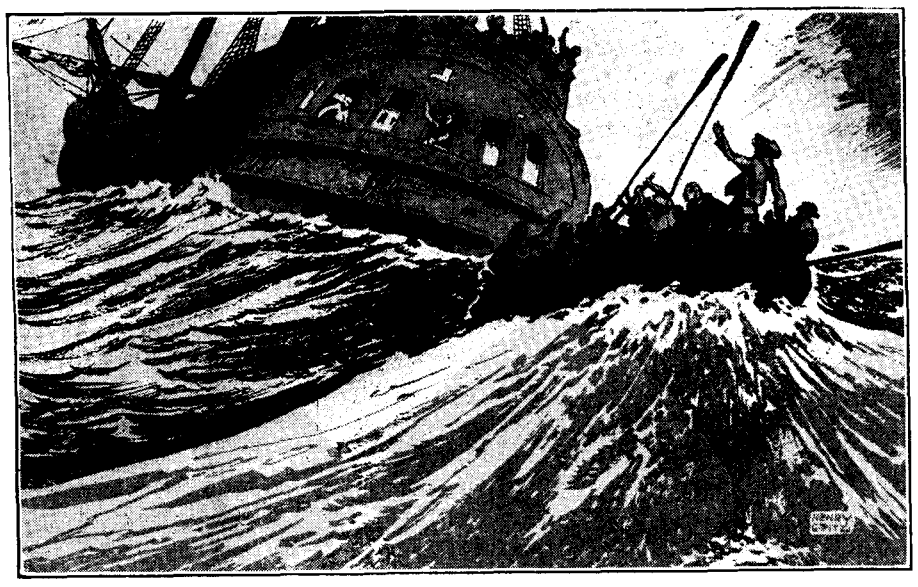

JACKET DESIGN FOR "MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY."

A Muddy Mixture

SOMEONE is always calling for a return of romance, or prophesying a new period of sentiment, or advertising the rebirth of the historical romance, or writing a final epitaph for realism and the hard-boiled generally. Yet nothing happens. Why?

Perhaps because our society is drenched and sodden with a flood and downpour of what, since it certainly is not realism, must share the noble name of romance, although it tawdries a complacent world as never before. Throw open a summer window in New York, row out on a lake, step into a hotel or department store, walk down the street in town or village from Quebec to Georgia to Oregon, and hear sentimental romance gurgling from a million radios and phonographs, from orchestras and theatres, from crooning voices. The so-called civilized world is being told every minute of the joys of love, the pains of parting, the love of mother, the glamour of the tropics, the delights of kissing, the willingness to forget everything for love. The banker at his instrument, the crowds in the 5 and 10 cent store, the girl on the couch, seem to find no language too banal, no music too mushy. They lap up sentimental romance. And in a country supposed to be hard and brutally competitive song writers (like screen writers) broadcast with great success a compound of syrup, soft soap, and insincerity that would have made Werther ill and caused the man of sensibility to foam at the mouth.

The description is not exaggerated, cannot be exaggerated. But why then, since the ear is so sentimental, is the eye so much more realistic? For our popular newspapers and magazines are all on the hard side. Their sensationalism is unfeeling, their taste runs to the brutal, their language is rough and cynical, they try to get at least an illusion of coarse reality. Even the comic strips are often cold-blooded and cruel. And it is a commonplace of literary criticism that for ten years now the novels and plays most successful among the intelligent have sought ruthlessly the reality of everyday experience. Consider the difference between what the characters in Lewis or Hemingway or Faulkner say and are said to feel, and what they *hear* when they turn on the radio, as they are constantly doing. Here is a critical perplexity.

It is explained perhaps by a Gresham's

(*Continued on page* 144)

The Captain's Cocoanuts

MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY. By CHARLES B. NORDHOFF and JAMES NORMAN HALL. New York. Little, Brown & Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by DAVID W. BONE

IN November, 1785, His Majesty's ship the *Bounty* sailed from Spithead on a mission to the then lately discovered island of Tahiti in the South Pacific. Lieutenant William Bligh commanded her. Her mission accomplished, she proceeded on the homeward voyage. Off the island of Tafoa the ship was seized by disaffected members of her crew under the leadership of the Acting Mate, Fletcher Christian. Bligh, together with seventeen of those remaining loyal to him, was placed in the launch of the *Bounty*—a small ship's boat of twenty-three feet in length—and set adrift. (He succeeded in making the land at Timor after a boat voyage of about 3600 miles, one of the most gallant achievements in all the records of the sea.) The *Bounty*, under the command of Christian, returned to Tahiti where a number of the men left her. These men were arrested on the arrival of *H. M. S. Pandora* in 1791 and ten survived the wreck of that vessel to be brought to court-martial at Spithead. About sixty years later the remnant of the *Bounty's* manning was discovered at Pitcairn's Island whither Christian had led them. These are the facts upon which "Mutiny on the Bounty," by Messrs. Nordhoff and Hall is based.

Quite frequently the annals of sea tragedy and disaster have been enlisted by the romantic novelist to provide structure for a plot, but it is not often that one finds a noteworthy case brought up and paraphrased with such understanding and sympathy and such fidelity to the truth of it as in the instance of the book under review. The general practice is to graft the pet and particular subject vogue of the day of writing on to the gnarled trunk of a bygone period, with results that are rarely other than a distorted growth. South Sea Island nonsense is largely the vogue of today: there is not a "sea ghost" but is busy (a weather eye on Hollywood) on a script in which the pelvic wrigglings of a movie *tapu* are given the first consideration. In this book the authors make no effort to plunge into the tide that flows towards the silver screen although they could—with ample warrant—have out-Horned any vivid imaginer in detail of a South Sea idyll.

(*Continued on page* 144)

A Whole Hive of Genius*

Reviewed by DAVID GARNETT

THERE has been such a deluge of books about Lawrence, and so many more threaten to appear, that the timid reader, even if he be a great admirer of Lawrence's work, may feel inclined to keep his head indoors until the storm has passed over. Such an attitude has the further excuse that these writers are often thundering at each other and blasting one another's characters and books with injunctions in the courts and the threats of libel actions.

But it would be a very great mistake to let the selection of Lawrence's letters slip by which has just come from the press. It has of course, inevitably some imperfections. Thus it is a great pity that none of Lawrence's early letters, before he wrote anything, when he was ambitious to become a painter, were not available, it is a pity that Mr. Koteliansky would not collaborate with the scheme. I think it is a mistake to have included so many purely business letters which are always the same from all writers to their publishers and agents. But these are very minor blemishes on a very notable volume, and though I shall make rude remarks about one or two passages later on, Aldous Huxley's Introduction is excellent; by which I mean really that anyone else who knew Lawrence would have done it far, far worse.

These letters are extraordinarily illuminating and will change a great many people's attitude to Lawrence who is one of the easiest of great writers to get hold of by the wrong end. Aldous Huxley, in his introduction, certainly emphasizes the right end of Lawrence to approach when he says:

> It is impossible to write about Lawrence except as an artist. He was an artist first of all, and the fact of his being an artist explains a life which seems, if you forget it, inexplicably strange . . . nobody would have heard of a Lawrence who was not an artist.

And again: "Lawrence was always and unescapably an artist."

That is the right approach to Lawrence and the right thing to say at the beginning of an introduction—and how desperately one wishes it were really true. Unfortunately Lawrence was continually escaping from being an artist halfway through his books—and then starting to be one again. His refusal to polish and work away at his books in cold blood shows how intermittent the artist in him was. Had Huxley considered Lawrence's heredity instead of his education (which was a very good one) he would have told us more.

My father believes in heredity and has a passion for explaining people by their grandparents. "That's the old Willoughby horse-thief strain coming out in her," he will say with all the gravity of Mr. Shandy, when some female guest has walked off with a book, and this method of analysis by grandmothers is peculiarly instructive when applied to D. H. Lawrence.

Lawrence's father was a coal miner with a dash of French blood in him; he was a wonderful dancer, a real devil, and as gay as they make them. The mother was superior: not a working woman at all but full of bourgeois ideals, aspirations to culture and refinement, and her father was a terrific force in revivalist religion: a friend (and enemy) of William Booth's who was involved in the first stirrings of the Salvation Army, *et cetera*. Another Nottingham man with whom Lawrence's grandfather had a feud was Boot, the cash chemist millionaire. When Boot's Library banned one of Lawrence's books he wrote:

> You know that my mother's father and this grand-duke of drugs quarreled and had a long war as to which of them should govern a chapel in Sneinton, in Nottingham. My grandfather won. So now—woe is me that I am a grandchild, for I am booted out of my place as a popular novelist.

The revivalist strain was transmitted almost unchanged to Lawrence and no doubt it was partly responsible for what Huxley calls his "special and characteristic gift . . . an extraordinary sensitiveness to what Wordsworth called 'unknown modes of being' . . . Lawrence could never forget, as most of us continuously forget, the dark presence of the otherness which lies beyond the boundaries of man's conscious mind."

That is true, but it is also true that Lawrence, almost alone with Tolstoy among prose writers, had the power of imparting the deeper, unexpressed feelings about ordinary things. This is not a capacity for seeing into a dark otherness, but a genius for seizing the fleeting, most essential, momentary emotions which are charged with intense significance, but which for some reason fade as they are felt. It is as though alone among prose writers they could take slow-motion pictures of ordinary human emotions by means of which they present them with a super-realism which looks strange at first sight. Great artists are said to heighten experience and Tolstoy and Lawrence seem to me to heighten the experiences of common life (which mean much more than dark othernesses) more than any other writers. Thus it is not because Lawrence, in Huxley's words, "had eyes that could see, beyond the walls of light, far into the darkness," that he is such a great writer any more than Tolstoy

* THE LETTERS OF D. H. LAWRENCE. Introduction by ALDOUS HUXLEY. New York: The Viking Press. 1932. $5.

This Week

SAN MARCO—MORNING.
By MARION STROBEL.

"SIR WALTER SCOTT."
Reviewed by FREDERICK E. PIERCE.

"ON THE MEANING OF LIFE."
Reviewed by JOSEPH JASTROW.

"THE GODS ARRIVE."
Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS.

"BLOODY YEARS."
Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL.

"SHOOT AND BE DAMNED."
Reviewed by FRANK ERNEST HILL.

HUMAN BEING.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

"ALEXANDER THE GREAT."
Reviewed by C. A. ROBINSON, JR.

TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHT WORDS.
By DON MARQUIS.

Next Week, or Later

BOSTON FROM WITHIN.
By M. A. DE WOLFE HOWE.

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was great because of his morbid terror of sexual display and sexual selection in human society.

Indeed both in their gifts, and in the limitations they seem wantonly to have put to their intelligences and their art, there is a curious resemblance between Tolstoy and Lawrence. In their vitality, their astonishing understanding of women, their attitude toward science and toward the greatest works of art and toward other artists, in their desire to change the world spiritually by founding small communities, in their hatred of their disciples, in their desire to change the world and to withdraw from it, in all these and many other ways there is a curious parellelism between them. And if Tolstoy was a great artist spoiled by ideas, by religious impulses, so was Lawrence, only spoiled much more.

Huxley talks about Lawrence's "loyalty to his genius." But this assumes there was only one genius in Lawrence. To me it always seemed as though he were a whole hive of them. There is Lawrence the poet-artist with an exquisite sensibility to words and nature, and there is the howling revivalist preacher who comes smashing into almost every book, trampling on the flowers and tearing its artistic structure to shreds. And it was because Lawrence could not control this destructive fanatic, that he almost always intensely disliked to contemplate great works of art. Great music, great architecture, Goethe, Tolstoy, Shakespeare, as Huxley says, oppressed him, and they oppressed him because he secretly knew that he could never shake off his old man of the sea and produce perfect works himself. For that reason great and "pure" art was an agony in him just as it was to Tolstoy who had murdered a great artist in himself. When they contemplated great works of art they felt the sting of conscience.

"Loyalty to his genius," says Huxley and Lawrence was loyal to his genius. But you must beware of confusing his loyalty with his criminal self-abandonment to his

he could not be a pure artist, and he once, about 1917, admitted it in what I am told was a very painful conversation. Yet it is right to insist that Lawrence is an artist, for the range of his art is great whereas his message, though continually repeated, seems to me to be monotonously the same. This insistence on Lawrence being an artist leads Huxley to talk some precious nonsense about artists in general.

> He knew by actual experience that "the real writer" is an essentially separate being, who must not desire to meet and mingle and who betrays himself when he hankers too yearningly after common human fulfilments. All artists know these facts about their species.

There was very little bunk of that sort about Lawrence. It is true Huxley quotes from a letter in which Lawrence says: "One has no real human relations: that is so devastating," and adds himself: "One has no real human relations: it is the complaint of every artist." It is, of course, impossible to write Introductions to books such as this, or reviews of them either, without saying a few silly things, but what a very silly one is this! It is the reverse of the truth. Great physicists and mathematicians and philosophers may well be lonely, but artists, and particularly writers, are from their nature always having human relationships. And what a silly thing for the editor of Lawrence's letters to say as he presents a volume of selected letters, which are themselves the evidence of a life most exceptionally full of human relationships.

Lawrence had a special gift for entering immediately on deeply intimate relations with everyone he met: he had shoals of human relationships, for he could charm every human creature who attracted or interested him and at first meeting almost every fresh separate person did attract him. He did, however, use up his human attachments rather fast, demanding too great an allegiance of some, and giving others too little, while others he drove off by preaching at them or explaining them to themselves. From some he had to run out and hide in the garden, yet all his relationships, whether they lasted for a long or a short time, were more intimate and deeper than are corresponding relationships among ordinary people. He couldn't buy a stamp without starting some intimate contact.

These letters, however, do much more than record his friendships and his personal relations, they give an extremely vivid picture of his own character, a more vivid picture than he achieves in any of his books. They show his intense vitality, for Lawrence was intensely alive, alive all the time, always creating, always fighting, always possessed by one or another of the devils inside him. When the black fiend from the revival meeting came on, he would storm and rage or sit nursing his devil as though it were a fire of green wood. Not for anything would he let his flame of wrath splutter out. And when the gay spirit came on no man has ever been fuller of a little cat's serious and intent make-believe.

This gay Lawrence expressed himself perfectly in a letter to Lady Cynthia Asquith.

> I walked across Switzerland and am cured of that little country for ever. As for the mountains—if I stick my little finger over my head, I can see it shining in the sky and call it Monte Rosa. That was in 1913 and Lawrence was

to leave England, he was a victim of the universal spy mania. I had, for example, to interview three different sets of detectives after Lawrence and Frieda had stayed late one night after dinner in 1915. Such a persecution, his extreme poverty, and the imbecile suppression of "The Rainbow" embittered him. But Lawrence took the tragedy of the war *personally*, the wound it made in his soul was a personal one, and it would not heal. The worst was that the war destroyed his critical balance a bit and gave the dark demon his chance. After the war Lawrence was far more at the mercy of his intuitive method. Before the war he would never have pressed his hands on his solar plexus saying seriously: "I don't feel it here," in discussing Darwinism, as he did in a discussion with Huxley. The war, I think, permanently damaged Lawrence, driving him out into the wilderness and making him just hate.

The war was however also responsible for the gloriously funny alliance between Lawrence and Bertrand Russell which is recorded in the grimmest manner in these letters at a moment when the issues seemed to be a matter of life and death to Lawrence.

Here is a synopsis of the episode, taken from letters to Lady Ottoline Morrell:

A PAINTING BY D. H. LAWRENCE.

finding in Italy, as Keats had found in Scotland:

> that lead was as weighty
> that fourscore was as eighty
> that a door was as wooden
> as in England.

There were agonies then, though they were faced with mocking courage.

> If you but knew the thunderstorms of tragedy that have played over my wretched head, as if I were set up on God's earth for a lightning conductor, you'd say: "Thank God I'm not as that poor man." If you knew the slough of misery we've struggled and suffocated through, you'd stroke your counterpane with a purring motion, like an old maid having muffins for tea in the lamplight and reading Stanley in Africa.

The war came and changed Lawrence. Married to a German wife and not allowed

"Bertrand Russell wrote to me. I feel a real heartening of love to him."

> What ails Russell is, in matters of life and emotion, the inexperience of youth. . . . Tell him not to write lachrymose letters to me of disillusion, disappointment, and age: that sounds like nineteen, almost like David Garnett. . . Really he's too absurdly young in his pessimism, almost juvenile. . . .
>
> Bertie Russell is here. . . . We think to have a lecture hall in London in the autumn and give lectures. He on ethics, I on immortality: also to have meetings, to establish a little society or body around a religious belief which leads to action. . . . Russell and I have really got somewhere.

But barely a month later he writes to Lady Cynthia Asquith:

> The lectures you ask about. . . . But it is no good. . . . He sent me a synopsis of the lectures and I can only think them pernicious. . . . I am so sick of people: they preserve an evil, bad, separating spirit. . . . What does Russell really want? . . . He wants to be ultimately a free agent. I feel like knocking my head against the wall: or running off to some unformed South American place where there is no thought of civilized effort. I suppose I could learn to ride a horse and live just by myself for myself.

The most interesting series of letters is certainly that to J. Middleton Murry. The characters of the two men were deeply antagonistic, a fact which Lawrence perceived fairly early on but which it was not in Murry's nature to recognize. Thus he alternately accepted and rejected Lawrence. Their friendship began in 1913. After the suppression of "The Rainbow," Lawrence wrote what he called a sequel to it, "Women in Love," which could not find a publisher until 1921. In 1919 Murry became editor of the *Athenæum*—a very good editor, too—and when "Women in Love" appeared he reviewed it in the *Nation and Athenæum*. I have taken the trouble to look up that review which made a strong impression on my mind at the time and the following quotations throw a very interesting and favorable light on Lawrence's character, as shown in his letters to Murry.

> He is deliberately, incessantly, and passionately obscene in the exact sense of the word. . . . Mr. Lawrence's consummation is a degradation, his passing beyond, a passing beneath, his triumph a catastrophe. It may be superhuman, we do not know; by the knowledge that we have we can only pronounce it subhuman and bestial, a thing that our forefathers had rejected when they began to rise from the slime.

Coming at that moment, in the organ of the most liberal English intellectuals, as the considered opinion of a man who had been one of Lawrence's closest friends, this article seemed to be an invitation to the police to suppress "Women in Love," as they had suppressed "The Rainbow." Eighteen months later, how-

the first number.

In 1924 Murry was desirous of going back with the Lawrences and living with them in New Mexico and Lawrence replied:

> *Don't think you are doing something* for me. I don't want that. . . . I don't really want any allegiance or anything of that sort. I don't want any pact. I won't have anything of that sort. . . . You know I don't care a single straw what you think of me. Realize that, once and for all. But when you get to twisting I dislike you. And I very much dislike any attempt at intimacy. . . . I don't care what you think of me, I don't care what you say of me, I don't even care what you do against me as a writer. Trust yourself, then you can expect me to trust you. . . .
>
> I tell you if you want to go to America as an unemotional man making an adventure, *bien, allons!* If you want to twist yourself into more knots, don't go with me. That's all. I never had much patience, and I've none now.

Murry stayed and twisted himself into knots at home and less than a year before his death we have Lawrence protesting:

> The me you say you love is not me but an idol of your own imagination. Believe me, you don't love me. The animal that I am you instinctively dislike . . . and you all say there's no such animal, or if there is there ought not to be.

That animal had very great virtues which are rare in men: every kind of honesty, every kind of courage, also hatred of every sort of mess. Lawrence was a rare, rare creature, very full of beauty, and we must be grateful for and treasure up, every particle of that beauty which has been left now he is dead.

David Garnett, son of Edward Garnett and Constance Garnett, and nephew of the late Richard Garnett, is a person of importance in the literary world of his own right, having produced in "Lady into Fox," "A Man in the Zoo," and later books some of the most delectable fantasies of recent years. A new book, "Pocohontas," is soon to appear from his pen. He is often mentioned in the Lawrence correspondence.

San Marco --- Morning

By MARION STROBEL

THEIRS are the cries that we dare not utter.
Theirs, with the saints, the arches that bugle the dawn.
See now, over the domes they curve and they flutter—
You say, "Though we go, the pigeons never are gone."

You say to me "Look!" when a gray bill sips from
The cracks where the rain is left, and the breeze
Ruffles the wings that are living chips from
The marble pillars, the marble arch and the frieze.

Scatter the last of the crumbs from your pocket!
Out of the cloven mist, out of the morning where
The campanile lifts like a rocket
Let vacant-eyed pigeons, crying, sink to the square.

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Humanism, Romance-Coated

SIR WALTER SCOTT. By JOHN BUCHAN. New York: Coward-McCann. 1932. $3.75.

THE LAIRD OF ABBOTSFORD. By DAME UNA POPE-HENNESSY. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by FREDERICK E. PIERCE

NOWADAYS the centenary of a famous author blossoms thick with century plants of biography. Sometimes we grow weary of their profusion, their bulky duplications, the time they consume in re-echoing old data. But Scott has always been fortunate in his biographers. The two volumes before us are not unworthy followers of the brilliant Lockhart. Both are breezily written, well documented, refreshingly supplied with new facts and ideas. Mr. Buchan's book is the better of the two, in every way an excellent piece of work; but both deserve praise. They are all the more stimulating because on several points they disagree. Read side by side, they are a challenge and an inspiration to the Scott enthusiast, forcing him always to clarify, at times to change, his estimate of the Wizard of the North. They call on the reader to formulate definitely his estimate of Scott as a man, as a poet, as a novelist, and as a force in the literary world.

The noble character of Scott as a man, so devotedly pictured by Lockhart, is reaffirmed by Mr. Buchan. Dame Una is more uncertain. While admitting his many fine qualities, she does, at times, show traces of the modern debunking spirit. Among other hesitations, she fails to believe in Scott's high idealism toward women, or that he carried through life the scars of his disappointed love for Williamina Belsches. Final settlement of such a question is difficult; no authentic records of the heart's inmost secrets exist; yet we sympathize with Mr. Buchan in disagreeing. Williamina may have been to her lover an ideal rather than a personality; she may have left behind a pleasant sentiment rather than an aching scar; but a young man's first creation of his feminine ideal is a great event in his life and one of its formative forces for years.

More serious still is the disagreement of the two biographers about Scott's business relations. Dame Una, reversing the judgment of Lockhart, charges her hero with no small degree of self-seeking, has one whole chapter on waiting for "Old Men's Shoes," and considers the Ballantyne brothers as victims rather than victimizers. Mr. Buchan once more, like a true hero-worshipping knight, breaks his lance in the cause of Lockhart and Scott. As regards transactions with the Ballantynes, the question is a very vexed one. There is much uncertainty as to what actually was done, and still more as to the motives behind the acts. Everybody admits the general honorableness of the great Scotchman; everybody admires the magnanimous heroism with which he died in harness, slaving to pay his debts. On the other hand, it is hard to acquit him of wilful self-blinding, of pouring his own resources and others' for years into a ship that he knew to be in danger of sinking. If he had been a modern banker, with a conscience trained according to modern financial standards, he might be open to severe criticism. But he was not a modern banker. He was the heir of feudal traditions ages old, which in the Scotland of his day were at once moribund and mighty. To dare greatly, to gamble magnificently, not only with one's own life and property, but also with the lives and property of others, to forgive others if they did the same thing as long as they did it gallantly, such had been the code of the border chiefs whose blood ran in Scott's veins, whose traditions filled his soul. He erred magnanimously and paid magnanimously with his life for erring. He would have criticized no one else for such conduct, nor would he have expected to be criticized himself for it. In business matters, as in all other matters, the man who would judge Sir Walter must remember the Scotland in which he lived, a country in a transitional stage between medievalism and modernism, partaking of both in its standards. If Scott was in some ways a canny business man, he had his affinities also with Stevenson's lord of Brisetout, facing the righteousness of a new age with a nobly obtuse feudalism. He was not a saint, but he was a gallant knight, one who obtained and deserved to obtain the respect of all who knew him.

Of Scott's poetry his two present biographers have little to say. They do not condemn; they do not exactly damn with faint praise; but they do sidetrack with eulogies only a few sentences long. Yet "Marmion" and its brother narratives were for many years the wonder of Great Britain. "You know," said Mrs. Wordsworth to her husband in 1813, "that Mr. Scott's verses are the delight of the times, and that thousands can repeat scores of pages." Is the glory so utterly departed from what once held Europe spellbound? I cannot persuade myself that it is so. The fire of his battle scenes is frankly admitted by Mr. Buchan, but admitted in a passing phrase. It should be shouted from the house-tops. Where, outside of Homer, is there anything finer than the description of Flodden Field in "Marmion"? Or than the description of Edward's army marching to Bannockburn?

> Now onward and in open view
> The countless ranks of England drew,
> Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,
> When the rough west hath chafed his pride,
> And his deep roar sends challenge wide
> To all that bars his way!
> In front the gallant archers trode,
> The men-at-arms behind them rode,
> And midmost of the phalanx broad
> The monarch held his sway.
> Beside him many a war-horse fumes
> Around him waves a sea of plumes. . . .

Scott wrote the best battle poetry of modern Europe because he lived in a world which still clung to the old feudal enthusiasm for war, which still believed military violence the price that the world pays for preserving its manhood, and which still held that manhood is worth the price.

Too often unnoticed, also, is the incisive vigor with which his verse narratives begin.

> The feast was over in Branksome tower,
> And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower.
>
> Day set on Norham's castled steep,
> And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep.
>
> The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
> Where danced the moon on Monan's rill.
>
> "Wake, Maid of Lorn!" the minstrels sung.—
> Thy rugged halls, Artonish, rung.

In every one of these there is the same smiting power at the start, the vivid picture, the instant precipitation of action.

Even the long tracts of seemingly mediocre work have their merit, in a way. As the great battle passages are tuned to the swell of trumpets, so these longer and more level stretches are keyed to the sound of the drum. They breathe no magic of "fairylands forlorn," but they do have a narrative march, like the tramping of feet to drum music. They have what Shelley and William Morris lack, even if they lack all that these poets have. Scott is one of the few men who can make a verse narrative march directly on from page to page.

As to the beauty of some of his shorter lyrics, that is generally acknowledged. They sparkle out like refreshing oases in the barren stretches of "Rokeby"; they leap up with artless, unexpected sweetness in the midst of the Waverley novels. There are many better poets than Scott, but even in verse his achievement can be easily underrated.

As to his novels, there has been a marked revival of interest in them. Lord David Cecil's article in the September *Atlantic* is an excellent analysis. Still better, because more extended and detailed, are the sections in Mr. Buchan's book. The Waverley novels, like their own Athelstane in "Ivanhoe," have come to life again, knocking down in their recovered strength the ultra-esthetic criticism that was preparing to bury them.

Photograph by Charles Phelps Cushing.
ABBOTSFORD, HOME OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Scott has too often been considered the author of the "Ivanhoe" type of story, partly because "Ivanhoe" is so generally taught in schools and so generally patronized in textbooks. A careful reader of his complete works is struck at once with the "God's plenty" of variety. There is the interest of sheer human nature, as in "The Heart of Midlothian." There is the superficially dazzling pageant of history, as in "Quentin Durward." There is the fierce, fatalistic drive of Greek tragedy or "Macbeth," as in "The Bride of Lammermoor." There is the easy-going discursiveness of Chaucer, as in "The Antiquary." There is the realistic comedy of manners, as in "Saint Ronan's Well."

The style, of course, is a drawback. Yet even here judges must be careful, in this vast, hurried, uneven output of ten thousand pages, not to appraise the good by the bad. There are long tracts of stilted, conventional language which were inexcusable even in 1820 and seem doubly so to our anti-conventional age. There are other wide stretches which are full of vitality and shrewd observation, yet with a clumsy ponderousness of rhythm which wearies the reader. Esthetes trained in the school of Walter Pater, moderns accustomed to the trenchant directness of Willa Cather, may not find the Waverley novels effortless reading. Yet for the persevering and discerning there is often a racy, picturesque vividness, especially in dialect passages, breathing the rich, unique life of the people. Alison Wilson says of the Duke, "That was him that lost his head at London—folk said it wasna a very gude ane, but it was aye a sair loss to him, puir gentleman." And from time to time one comes on magnificent passages, such as the well-known description of the company around Hell's Tavern board in "Wandering Willie's Tale":

> There was the fierce Middleton and the dissolute Rothes, and the crafty Lauderdale; and Dalzell, with his bald head and a beard to his girdle; and Earlshall with Cameron's blude on his hand; and wild Bonshaw that tied blessed Mr. Cargill's limbs till the blude sprang; and Dumbarton Douglas, the twice-turned traitor baith to country and King. There was the Bluidy Advocate MacKenzie, who, for his worldly wit and wisdom, had been to the rest as a god. And there was Claverhouse, as beautiful as when he lived, with his long, dark, curled locks streaming down over his laced buff coat, and his left hand always on his right spule-blade to hide the wound that the silver bullet had made. He sat apart from them all, and looked at them with a melancholy, haughty countenance; while the rest hallooed and sang, and laughed till the room rang. But their smiles were fearfully contorted from time to time, and their laughter passed into such wild sounds as made my gudesire's very nails go blue, and chilled the marrow in his banes.

It is a pity, of course, that Scott did not take more pains with his style, for obviously he could write much better than he often did; but even the careless work of a genius bears on it the mark of the royal eagle's claw and repays study.

As a student of character Scott has given us one of the longest and most varied lists of *dramatis personæ* in the world. Mr. Buchan cites one hundred and fifty-three as appearing in "Ivanhoe" alone. For the complete Waverley series the list runs into thousands. The variety, the panoramic effect, of such a multitude, is an achievement in itself; but, if these countless characters be superficially done, it is an achievement in the field of Eugene Sue rather than that of Shakespeare. Are they superficial? Obviously there are marked differences in this respect, for Scott, with his vast creative ability, and lack of artistic conscience, poured out good, bad, and indifferent promiscuously from the same cornucopia. He is Shakespeare one minute and Sue the next. He is nobler when he mirrors the Scotch with a countryman's enthusiasm than when he glasses the public taste for a best seller. In judging all his work, however, certain facts must be kept in mind. Scott's conceptions of life were molded by the hardships of an impoverished country and the strenuous traditions of feudalism. Under such conditions, people fighting for the right to live had neither time nor inclination for detailed self-analysis. Hence he always represents them as either acting or acted on, either the hammer or the anvil. For our modern study in complex motives and complicated ethics he substitutes the ancient code of Homer and Dante which divided all motives into a few simple classes and all rights and wrongs into a few rigid categories. In an iron age, what a man did was what counted; he had other things to do than analyzing his complicated motives. Scott is true, often profoundly true, to this ancient way of thinking. To condemn him is to condemn Boccaccio and Sophocles.

Again, the whole romantic age was intensely interested in the individual's reactions to his environment. With Sir Walter this interest was heightened by the fact that Scottish environment was a

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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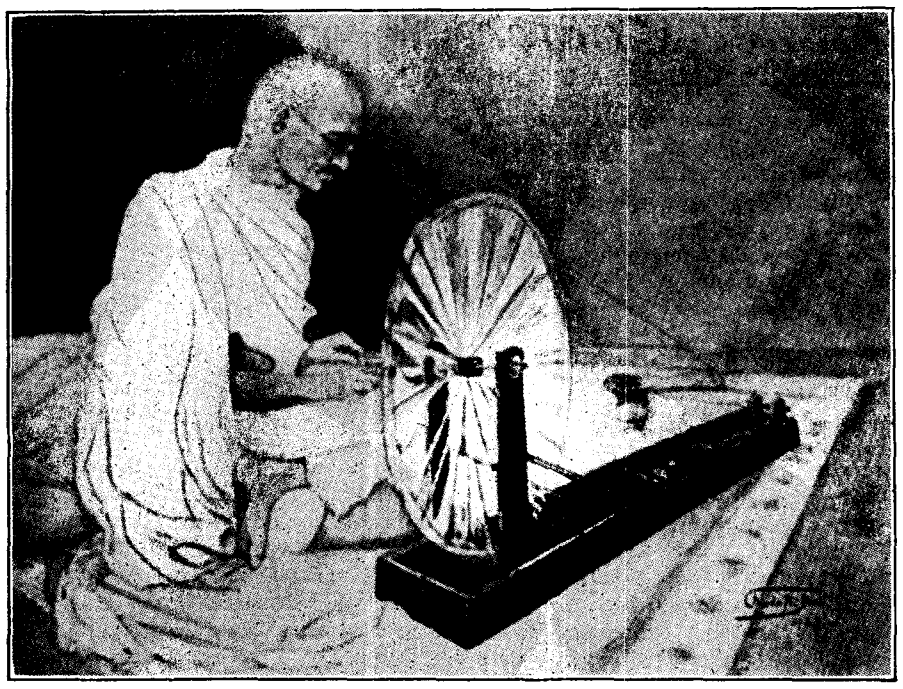
world in process of change, evolving from medievalism to modernism. His antiquary lives in the past while he is cheated in the present. Edie Ochiltree, the fanatic covenanters, the martyred Highland chief in "Waverley," Dalgetty, and Ravenswood, were all creatures of their time. Here is a masterly study of the hammer and the anvil, of the way in which men shape a changing world, and the way that it shapes them. It is unfair to judge such work by the standards of "Hamlet" and "Middlemarch"; it deals with a different *cross-section of truth.*

After such adjustment of standards, few can refuse reverence for the Waverley novels. Let him who still doubts turn to the second chapter of "Old Mortality." Beginning with the fifth paragraph, "Near to the enormous leathern vehicle" and ending with the twelfth, "the capacity of waiting gentlewomen," he will find a segment of life worthy of Chaucer at his best. Here in two or three pages are masterly pictures of Lady Margaret Bellenden, of the old steward Harrison, of the drunken, cavaliering butler, of the malingering Cuddie Headrigg, with his self-willed mother Manse, of the half-witted Goose Gibbie, and of Charles II, King of England, indiscriminately smacking hostess and housemaid like a true "merry monarch." Such passages do not seem despicable when compared with the great Prologue to the "Canterbury Tales."

That Scott's literary influence was far-reaching is known to everybody. From the Volga to the Mississippi, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, the fiery torch of his example was carried by fervid imitators. With him, as with the king of England, the sun never set on his dominions. That period of leadership has now long since passed away; the northern wizard has long been discrowned as a force, even if he is still enshrined as a classic; consequently the exact nature of that earth-shaking influence is no longer clearly grasped. It was not merely a literary fad, not simply an orgy of picturesque fiction masquerading as history. There were, of course, the G. P. R. Jameses and the Fouqués as there is pseudo work among the camp followers of any great leader. But noble enthusiasms and deep thoughts were stirred also. It was the reading of "Quentin Durward" that made Ranke an historian; the Waverley novels were an inspiration to Newman while groping his way back to the medieval fold. Those historical narratives proved an inspirational springboard for the great realists Balzac and Dostoievsky, giving them a powerful impulsion into literature unlike the author's own. His anachronism-studded tales helped to evoke such carefully documented studies of the past as Thackeray's "Henry Esmond" and Flaubert's "Salammbô." It is an open question if he did not help to inspire that very historical research which at times has tended to undermine his own prestige. Unlike most authors, he was naturally a leader of men, one who understood humanity's needs and reactions. Hence the literary tradition which he started was less subject to misunderstanding and degradation, more of a bracing power for good than is usually the case with men of letters. Keats and Milton must have groaned in Heaven to see how humanity distorted their teachings. But the soul of Scott, looking down on the literary empire that he founded, could behold his handiwork and call it good. He gave humanity the best that it was capable of assimilating and drew its vast multitudes up to a higher level thereby. Where Coleridge was "caviare to the general," Scott was their bread of life. Whether he was a great artist or not, he was a great uplifting force. Even those so dominated by modern taste that they cannot enjoy his writings, must pause in the pages of "Guy Mannering" as they would pause on the field of Bannockburn, and say, "Here history was made." And for most of us "Guy Mannering," in spite of its antiquated style, in spite of its veneer of romance, remains a great human document. It has survived one century and promises to survive many.

Frederick E. Pierce is Associate Professor of English in Yale University, and is an authority on literature of the Romantic Period.



ONE OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO "THE MEANING OF LIFE."
From a sketch of Mahatma Gandhi by Frieda Hauswirth in "A Marriage to India" (Vanguard).

Why Live?

ON THE MEANING OF LIFE. By WILL DURANT. New York: Ray Long & Richard R. Smith. 1932.

Reviewed by JOSEPH JASTROW

DESPITE its journalistic make-up, there remains in the mind of the reader of this diversified compilation a net surplus of substance and significance, after the jolty impression of the mingling of the jaunty and the profound has subsided. To Dr. Durant himself may be awarded the crown; for none of his correspondents states the sources of the discontents of our civilization so forcibly, so eloquently, nor indicates the supports of endeavor so convincingly. Dr. Durant's arraignment and analysis, though less searching and far otherwise conclusioned than the credo of Freud, published two years ago and possibly the inspiration of the present project, may be ranked with it.

Spurred by a publisher's enterprise, Dr. Durant prepared a letter of inquiry asking a number of notables to tell him what meaning life had to them, wherein they found their inspiration to carry on, their compensation to do so cheerfully and happily, if such be their lot or mood. The incisive letter made perfectly clear why the question was raised. It was a strong statement of the bitterest possibilities, to avoid the superficial optimism which the inquiry would so readily arouse. Dr. Durant's prologue is an "anthology of doubt"; his epilogue is a letter to a (contemplative) suicide.

Between the two are assembled the contributors. They begin notably enough with H. L. Mencken (less aggressive and more domestic than commonly rated), John Erskine (discriminatingly helpful and hopeful), Charles A. Beard (sage in insight, sound in outlook), John Cooper Powys (sensitive to mystery, persistently idealistic), E. A. Robinson (ably challenging the mechanistic and proclaiming the thrill of art and the nobility of piloting even under poor visibility). The let-down is abrupt and the contrast motley in the next compartment, labelled "From Hollywood to the Ganges," which opens with Will Rogers and curtains with Gandhi, flanked by John Haynes Holmes and Abbé Dimnet. However intriguing, and in its scope legitimate, the satisfaction of acquaintance with the credos of a surgeon (Mayo), a musician (Gabrilowitch), a motion-picture producer (Laemle), a college president (Hopkins), an editor (Ochs), an explorer (Stefansson), an encyclopedist in knowledge (Havelock Ellis), and an essayist (André Maurois, who made of his reply a rhapsodic brochure)—the total outcome of the interviews is far less than their box-office promise. The ladies are there, too: Mary E. Wooley, Gina Lombroso, and Helen Wills Moody, the last as expert with pen as with racquet. The contribution of this fine philosopher at twenty-five, a superb tribute to the restless quest for action, is the most enjoyable of them all.

The Captain's Cocoanuts

(*Continued from page* 141)

They maintain the spirit and, indeed, the language, of 1787 and present the full and thrilling tale as Roger Byam, once midshipman in the *Bounty,* would recall it—after many years—in the quiet of his West Country home.

Superficially, one might be inclined to consider that the authors had the book already written for them, but that is very far from the case. Into the old formal tale they have succeeded in putting the very breath of life, color, vigor, and all with admirable restraint. Under their hands Roger Byam becomes a living character and his tale reveals the genesis of mutiny at sea, the dilemma of conflicting loyalties and likings, duress, trial by court-martial, and the final whiplash of authority that left three dark figures to dangle from the yard-arm of the *Brunswick* in full view of a sullen Fleet.

The art of the book is well nigh perfect. In all my acquaintance with the literature of the sea I can recall no more believable and arresting figure than the Roger Byam whom the authors have created, largely—or so I surmise—from the detailed account of the court-martial held in the *Iron Duke,* September '17 (contained in "The Mutiny in the Bounty," Notable Trials Series) and from the known fact that, after being condemned to death and later exonerated from the charge of complicity, Byam attained to the rank of Captain in the Royal Navy. The character, kindly and serious minded, of the youthful midshipman (as evinced in that dark trial) is developed in the aged narrator who "in the evening, when the unimportant duties of an old man's day are done," conjures up the ghosts of bygone shipmates in the *Bounty* and gives to each, loyalist and mutineer alike, his due. The reader is engaged by this kindly attitude at the very first opening of the volume. All passion dissolved in retrospect, the narrator displays no rancor at the folly of his commander and his shipmates that brought him to the prisoner's bar. There is no embittered apportionment of blame, no fierce revolt at the naval system of his day that encouraged mutiny from such trifles as a theft of cocoanuts. As something inevitable, he traces the source of the disaster: petty tyrannies, stifled murmurings, meanness in the establishment of rations, inconsiderate reprimand in full hearing of the ratings of the crew (that fashioned the leader of the revolt from among the commissioned ranks), it is all credible, all too true.

Altogether, an unusual and completely satisfying book that the reader of this review is entreated to consider antidote to so much of the spectacular and specious poison that passes for "sea" literature today.

David Bone is novelist as well as sea captain. He is Commanding Officer of the S. S. Transylvania, *and author among other books of "The Brassbounder" and "The Lookoutman."*

A Muddy Mixture

(*Continued from page* 141)

Law of sentiment—the bad currency driving out the good. This cheap romance has numbed the imagination, making the uncritical unable and the critical unwilling to take on anything better. Viewed this way, tough-minded reading seems to be a reaction against soft listening. But this is a little too simple.

A completer explanation may be found in Ortega y Gasset's description of the mass mind in his recent "Revolt of the Masses," translated from the Spanish. The mass man for him is by no means confined to the undistinguished proletariat or bourgeoisie. His neatest example is the type of research scientist who is a learned specialist in a narrow subject but ignorant of all other aspects of world truth and resentful of any authority greater than his own in art, literature, politics, or economics. Such barbarians, Ortega y Gasset says, are typical of the majority man today. They will not listen to authority, will not follow leaders, because they cannot. A comfortable world has been built for them by the efforts of capable minorities. It functions easily. Government, sanitation, machines are provided for them as by a law of nature, and, like spoiled children, they enjoy without gratitude. They have lost respect for authority, because they seem to need none, and the idea of disciplining themselves toward any excellence does not enter their heads. They have, in other words, no morality. They cannot listen, because the power to yield to superior intelligence is atrophied.

This seems a long way from the question of romance, but is it? These millions that let mawkish sentimentality pelt upon them, as cows in a pasture take sunlight or rain, are simply mass minds without protection of will or instinct against appeals that come in upon the easy, lower planes of their minds. And the same millions accept, according to their kind, a contradictory and reactionary realism of toughness, cynicism, brutality, with the same easy acquiescence, provided it comes to them in mass form and requires no discipline of choice or rejection. Thus in our society two currents of influence that should be mutually exclusive rip and muddle together in the inconsistent, undecided, and incoherent entity which we call the modern mind.

And if your son studies "Lycidas" to the melody of

O Sukey Sue
I love you

on the radio, while your daughter talks birth control to her partner as they dance to the wailing of jazzed sentimentality, consider your own mind and the perilous mixtures in it, which come from lax willingness to accept anything that is without responsibility to self, society, or the idea of God.

Among the forty recipients of Goethe gold medals bestowed by President Hindenburg in connection with the Goethe centenary celebrations are Signor Mussolini, M. Herriot, and Mr. J. L. Garvin. The Goethe Prze was presented to Herr Gerhardt Hauptmann, the playwright.

The Saturday Review
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History of an Artist

THE GODS ARRIVE. By EDITH WHARTON. New York: D. Appleton & Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

THIS is a sequel to "Hudson River Bracketed," whose events are so skilfully recalled in the opening chapters that "The Gods Arrive" can be read by itself. But for full effect the two books should be read together, for in structure if not in viewpoint they are one piece—the first three hundred thousand words of a history not yet concluded. For despite the title, the gods have not yet arrived at the end of the book; neither the artistic development of Vance Weston nor his emotional relation to Halo Spear has reached a point that satisfies the reader, and it is hardly to be supposed that so scrupulous an artist as Mrs. Wharton would be more easily satisfied than her customers.

"Hudson River Bracketed" was essentially the early history of an artist—of Vance Weston of Euphoria, Illinois, who came to New York, married the devoted but hopelessly unintelligent Laura Lou, found his intellectual and eventually his emotional inspiration in Halo Spear, the impoverished New York patrician who married Lewis Tarrant; and finally, after his wife's death and Halo's break with her husband, could look forward to the companionship of a woman who understood him. It was a long book, and much of it was the sort of thing that Mrs. Wharton simply cannot do; she understands gentlefolk, artists, and servants; but if she knows the lesser breeds without the law she is unable to transfer her comprehension to the reader. Especially she writes of the Middle West and its inhabitants as if she had never been west of the Metropolitan Opera House, and had learned about Middle Westerners from a careful study of "Main Street" and "Martin Chuzzlewit." But one thing she can do—and there are not more than half a dozen Americans who could attempt it with any pretence of knowing what they are talking åbout—and that is the nature of the artist.

It may be hard to believe that anyone so utterly innocent and incompetent as Vance Weston could have been thrown up by twentieth-century America; but there have been artists like that—Shelley, for instance—and as a picture of an ineffectual angel in New York of the nineteen twenties "Hudson River Bracketed" was just about as good as possible. Mrs. Wharton not only knows but can convey the essential perceptions and psychological processes of the artist; methodical worker that she is herself, she understands why other artists cannot be methodical; and perhaps a more astounding insight than any, she understands the feeling and the dreadful consequences of a type of poverty that she herself can never have known. Whatever Vance Weston did or did not do, you felt that he was authentically alight with the divine fire and that some day he would prove it.

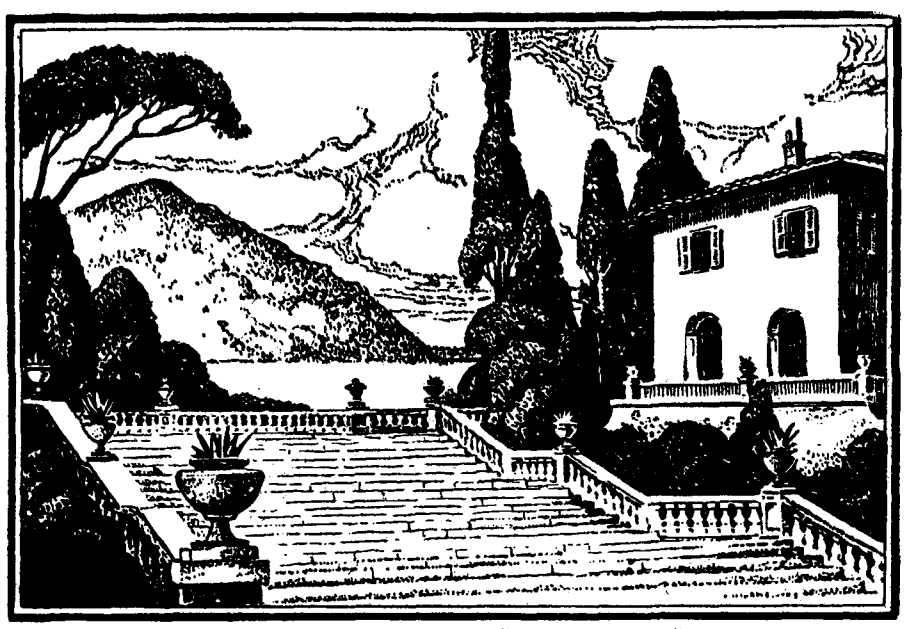
"The Gods Arrive" puts both Vance Weston and Halo to a much severer test. Vance has money now—an allowance from his father, presently supplemented by the royalties of a successful book (what became of that bad contract that played so large a part in "Hudson River Bracketed"?), and he and Halo can travel about Europe in passably decent style without financial worries. Vance is still learning, still assimilating; his relation to Alders, the "half-cultured" American he met in Spain, from whom he could take what he needed better than from Halo's far deeper culture, is an admirable piece of insight and of depiction. But when he falls in with the literary sets of London and Paris he becomes, all of a sudden, only another small-town boy who made good. He borrows the mannerisms of those around him, he becomes insufferably inflated; and at the end of "The Gods Arrive" he has not yet written anything that justifies his promise.

Now this has happened to a thousand young men and women of late years—people who had a spark of genuine artistic instinct, but not enough to survive the systematic exploitation of the literature industry (or racket) as at present organized. But the Vance Weston of "Hudson River Bracketed" was not the ordinary small-town boy with enough talent for two or three pretty good books; he was presented as something authentic. In "The Gods Arrive" he has little of the artist but the characteristic vices; and after all it was not an avidity for other men's money and other men's women that made Richard Wagner an artist. If there was stuff in Vance Weston, the stuff that his beginnings promised, it will have to come out in the third volume of the trilogy.

But the emphasis in "The Gods Arrive" is on Halo. When Vance wanted her she went to him, though her precipitance annoyed her husband into refusing her the divorce he had promised; and thereafter she devoted herself to the congenial task of "serving the genius while she adored the man." Completely devoted, she made no effort to become anything in her own right; and eventually she learned that such a gift as Cosima Wagner's is perhaps even rarer than her husband's. It had been Halo, years before, who first opened the world of the mind to Vance Weston; later, when they were both unhappily married but as yet unaware of their love, her consciousness "seemed an extension of his own, in which every inspiration, as it came, instantly rooted and flowered, and every mistake withered and dropped out of sight." She was, in short, his best pal and his severest critic; "she was the woman his arms longed for, but she was also the goddess, the miracle, the unattainable being who haunted the peaks of his imagination." But when the unattainable being was attained, when his arms that longed for her had only to reach out and take her, when the force that had translated itself to their innocent minds as a spiritual sympathy had found its direct and natural outlet—then, in due course, she presently became the woman he wanted to get away from.

The thing has happened several billion times in the history of the human race, and it is a measure of Mrs. Wharton's skill that she keeps you interested in this familiar fable, even though neither of the leading characters is as respectable, intellectually, as in "Hudson River Bracketed." Granted that Halo was madly in love, it might be supposed that a woman of her background and experience would have handled herself and her artist a little more shrewdly. Yet even after she knew him, even after the tie between them was strained, she fatally tried to go on being his intellectual inspiration; she told him what she really thought about a bad book he had written, and his response to criticism was that of every artist, good or bad, authentic or spurious. So presently he was back home in Euphoria, enjoying a new harmony with his sister Mae because "for want of an intelligent ear he had to turn to a merely sympathetic one." By that time he would have preferred sympathy, even if intelligence could have been had.

"The Gods Arrive" suggests what the married life of Agnes Wickfield might have been, if the last chapters of "David Copperfield" had been written eighty years later. Granted that an artist such as Vance Weston needed the stable framework of marriage—a permanent woman, to get away from and to come back to—on the basis of the record so far Laura Lou, who could never understand him and never tried, would have been a better wife for him than Halo, who had much to give him and tried to give him all of it. At the end he comes back to her, but it is hard to believe that this is more than another of his impulses; that he will not leave her again the next time she imprudently says what she thinks about his writing, if another comet like Floss Delaney flames across his sky. If Vance Weston is to become the real artist that he once promised to be, if Halo is to learn how to manage him, it will have to be done in the next book.



FROM THE JACKET DESIGN OF "THE GODS ARRIVE."

A Boy's Growth

THE LABYRINTH. By INA SEIDEL. Translated by OAKLEY WILLIAMS. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by CLARA G. STILLMAN

AT the earliest possible moment when, for the first time, at the age of five, he had spelled out a consecutive sentence Father took him away from Mother, away from the life of play with his little sisters in the sunshiny garden and the kitchen where one could feel a peace and redolence that enfolded one like a field of ripe corn. He now belonged to Father, to whom everything belonged, and he sat all day in the study and made pot-hooks and learned and learned and carried heavy books, and by the time he was ten he was a young savant who knew six languages and could be of real use to Father in his translations and compilations. Father was tall and magnificent with beautiful clothes smelling of tobacco and lavender, an endless capacity for mental activity, and a boundless physical vigor that required Gargantuan quantities of sustenance. He worked and ate all the time and expected his son to do at least the former while amiably contemptuous of him for being unable to compete with him in the latter capacity.

The boy was early ground into the mill of his father's being, his far superior gifts stultified in the process of becoming a child prodigy, body and brain overtaxed, his emotional needs disregarded. The effect of this treatment on a sensitive and lovable nature is the subject matter of this book. The father towering over the life of his child and engulfing him, the confused currents of loyalty and resentment in which the boy struggled for years, the phantasy that symbolized their relation, and finally the whole of life, these are the elements of an absorbing narrative, rich in incident and understanding, and beautiful in expression.

To say that this is a historical novel or a fictional biography is, though it is technically true, since it introduces adventures in the Holy Russia of Catherine the Great and with Captain Cook, to do the book an ill turn, for it suggests the faulty integration of many hybrid productions, and this, in spite of its basic erudition, might be an entirely unhistorical, unbiographical novel. For all its eighteenth century background and wealth of typical detail (never overemphasized) it suggests a work of pure fiction, for that background is woven into it with the rare type of imagination that evokes surroundings with a composite appeal to the feelings and all the senses—it is full of shapes and colors, sounds and smells—and conveys at the same time the profoundly formative influence of certain scenes under special emotional conditions, the quiet of a room or the startling strangeness of ice-shapes in polar seas. Ina Seidel is a poet who has already published several volumes of poetry. She has not only the seeing eye for beauty and the power to express it magically, but the profoundly penetrating eye for character and human relations, a penetration subtle and tender, tolerant and witty. There are masterfully drawn figures in this book—George, the boy and the man, in the long struggle with his subjection to his father, the father never overdrawn, human and appealing even in his extreme egotism and vanity, Captain Cook, Mother, and Janusch and Larry, minor characters made unforgettable by the savor of their presentment and the part that incidents connected with them played in the boy's development.

The translation is for the most part excellent, reproducing the rhythm and texture of the original so admirably that one is all the more shocked at its occasional lapses.

A travelling library, unique in size and design, was put into operation on September 28th by the New York Public Library, to give improved book service to the outlying sections of the Bronx. This book-truck contains three compartments. In the front compartment, besides the driver's seat, there are facilities for the charging of books to borrowers and for the registration of applicants. The rear compartment contains facilities for the discharging of books. There are two doors on the curb side for the use of the public—the one in the rear compartment being the entrance, that in the front compartment, the exit. The middle compartment is composed of the expanding section, a feature of construction developed and controlled by the Expando Company. This section is ten feet long and on each side contains double book shelves, four tiers of which face the outer or street side and six tiers of which face the interior. The book shelves total about two hundred feet and have a capacity of two thousand volumes.

Book are borrowed from the book wagon on the reader's card issued by the book wagon or by the sub-branches or branch libraries. Almost 8,000 readers are registered at the book wagon.

The Saturday Review Recommends

This Group of Current Books:

MUTINY ON THE *BOUNTY*. By JAMES NORMAN HALL and CHARLES NORDHOFF. *Little, Brown.*
A vivid and veracious presentation in fiction form of a romantic sea episode.

THE MORE I SEE OF MEN. Edited by DR. MABEL ULRICH. *Harpers.*
A collection of vivacious disquisitions on men, by a group of noted women writers.

THE GODS ARRIVE. By EDITH WHARTON. *Appleton.*
A sequel to "Hudson River Bracketed" which may, however, be read by itself.

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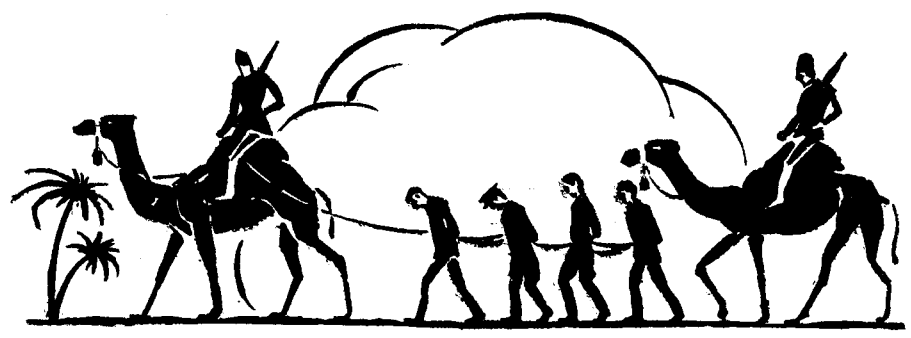

FROM THE JACKET DESIGN OF "BLOODY YEARS."

In Enemy Country

BLOODY YEARS. By FRANCIS YEATS-BROWN. New York: The Viking Press. 1932. $2.75.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

THIS new book by the author of "The Lives of a Bengal Lancer" flickers back and forth over the Near East with Constantinople as its focal point. The first part is history; those years, bloody indeed, between 1908 and 1914, which saw the end of Abdul Hamid II, the vicious slaughter of the Balkan wars, and the fateful alliance between Germany and the Young Turks. The last two-thirds are the recollections of a British prisoner of war with the Turks, an Observer in the Royal Flying Corps who swooped down from the skies of Mesopotamia one day in 1915 to cut the telegraph line leading to Bagdad, and did cut it, but not before his plane cracked up against a telegraph post within plain sight of a troop of Arab cavalrymen. The region itself, the mad and whirling time, the pattern of Major Yeats-Brown's book and his point of view, all contribute to that sense of "flicker" aforesaid.

Constantinople itself, during that tremendous decade, held within its lovely frame an all but indescribable jumble of East and West, of the scum of a score of jealous races, of inner feuds, of the intrigues of those whom Major Yeats-Brown, with a certain predilection for the Old Turks, describes as the "vultures of Christendom." There were still flickers of the "Désenchantées" of Pierre Loti; and about the Sultan's Palace of Yildiz Kiosk, of the "Arabian Nights." And alongside were Western trolley-cars, the Orient Express, a dozen subject races intriguing for independence through Western newspapers and banks, and finally the Germans, running things for a time almost as if they were in their own house.

No one who has so much as dipped into the Balkans or nibbled into those countless plausible brochures turned out by Bulgarian, Serbian, and neighboring propagandists on the disputes, racial, frontier, religious, or otherwise which perpetually embitter them, needs to be told of the difficulty of digging out the real truth in that quarter.

Beginning with an intimate picture, in semi-fictional form, of an evening with old Abdul Hamid and one of his frightened little girl slaves, Major Yeats-Brown endeavors, in two or three brief chapters of comparatively "straight" history, to cover the tangled record of those years which saw the end of the old Ottoman Empire, the rise of new Balkan states, and the coming of the Great War, with the new Turkey taking its chance with the Central Powers. His manner is a mixture of the regulation name-and-date method and the semi-fictional style of much modern biography, which, perhaps, because of the complexity of the stuff in hand, misses the definiteness of the one and the flowing persuasiveness of the other. The narrative is sprinkled with sharp, macabre color and will be read with interest by Americans for its exoticism, if nothing more; yet nine out of ten, unfamiliar as they are with the names and events, will be left, one suspects, with a rather spattering sense of the matter in hand. All this historical part has the air of a synopsis long drawn out, of something in the nature of a suspended clause preceding the start of the real thing, which arrives at last, on page 109, when the Royal Flying Corps' Observer comes zooming down from the Mesopotamian sky.

Yeats-Brown was a prisoner of the Turks for two and a half years, and as such had many adventures and saw the insides of a number of prisons, in Bagdad, Mosul, Afionkarahissar, and finally in Constantinople. It is a bit late for war prisoners' reminiscences, and in spite of the fact that he saw much cruelty about him (once, underneath his window in Constantinople, a native prisoner was strung up by the ankles and bastinadoed on the soles of his bare feet until he died, or at any rate, was near death), Yeats-Brown's personal experiences were a lark compared with what thousands of Germans and Austrians suffered in Siberia. But the scene and the humans he encountered are always novel to Western eyes, and then Yeats-Brown is a rather special sort of young Englishman. Orthodox to the extent that he went through most of his prison experiences, apparently, with a monocle screwed into his eye (and when he stood on his head, with the glass still there, in some of his *Yoga* exercises, the Turks not unnaturally thought that their charge had gone a bit balmy!), he had dipped sufficiently into Oriental philosophy during his stay in India to become heterodox toward a good many of the conventions of the routine well-bred Britisher.

Yeats-Brown believes "it was good for me as a boy to have smoked *bhang*, for it swept me on its pinions from the inhibitions of my upbringing to a world where passion is respected," and one of the novel episodes in his story is that in which he slipped away from his guards one night to smoke opium with a somewhat decadent young man who served as secretary to the prison Commandant. Novel, too, and more practical, although too sketchy, are his brief dissertations on "the means whereby the psyche may be unveiled through the coöperation of lungs, imagination, and viscera," on "the psychic importance of the bowels." Disassociation of the functions of the body, Yeats-Brown observes,

> may lead to startling temporary advances in knowledge, but such conquests are unstable and disintegrated, like so much of modern civilization. . . . Christ and Mohammed and Buddha did not neglect their physical bodies, nor exalt the brain above instinct; it is this stiff-necked generation that has done so. Truth cannot be acquired without feeling-realization; to reach it we must do something more than turn printed pages, listen with dull ears, wag autointoxicated tongues.

Yeats-Brown made several attempts to escape. After one temporary success, he posed for a time, in women's clothes, as a Mademoiselle Josephine, and was gallantly made love to, under the eyes of a police chaperone, in one of the Constantinople cafés, by the Russian officer, also a prisoner, with whom he planned a flight to Tiflis. (Officer prisoners with money seem to have had rather a soft time of it in Constantinople, and sometimes went out to take the air and ogle the Periote world of fashion, provided they were accompanied by one of those brass-plate Turkish policemen whom Yeats-Brown nicknames Dog Collar Men.) Later he grew a mustache, put a cheap watch-chain across his waistcoat and a bowler hat over one ear, and posed as a Hungarian mechanic. Then there was a mysterious White Lady, a plucky English woman, working, apparently, for the British Intelligence, who helped him and other British prisoners. Of all these plots and minor perils, Yeats-Brown writes with humor and a certain carefree boyishness. He finally got away for good, through the railings of the wall surrounding the Ministry of War prison in Stamboul, and by that time the war was practically over, anyway.

Prisoner of War

SHOOT AND BE DAMNED. By SERGEANT ED HALYBURTON and RALPH GOLL. New York: Covici-Friede. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANK ERNEST HILL

WITH this volume a chapter is added to the literature of American war experience as recorded by those who took part in it. Its individual qualities are three: it is a story of war as Americans knew it in German prison camps; it is a story of enlisted men, not of officers; and it is told by a hard-boiled Army sergeant who might have stepped from the side of Captain Flagg in "What Price Glory."

Sergeant Halyburton had a long Army record before the war started, and one likes to speculate on the continuation of that record in action. Action is Halyburton's natural and proper environment. However, while his capture took place immediately upon his arrival at the Front in November, 1917, he managed to extract a maximum of activity from a life behind gray walls. A photograph taken of him by the Germans soon after his capture found its way to America and became the model for a statue "Captured, but not Conquered," which was to serve prominently in Liberty Loan Drives. At Tuchel in West Prussia and later at Rattstatt on the Rhine Halyburton assumed the position of leader among the Americans, and according to his own story and to the warmly worded letter of appreciation from General Pershing, was extraordinarily busy bolstering up the morale of his fellow prisoners, wringing concessions from reluctant Germans, and securing food from the Red Cross.

The episodes in such a narrative are nevertheless few and in most cases unspectacular. The mental state of the hero and his men alone can magnify them into importance, and that state remains in the end more important than most of the occurrences associated with it. This is a fact tacitly conceded by Sergeant Halyburton and Mr. Goll, and every effort is made by the authors to portray the sufferings of the men, who at times numbered thousands. In part the attempt is successful. The terrific cold and incredibly meager rations of the first few months, the conditions of labor, the contemptuous cruelty of the German captors, modified by thoroughness and instances of personal kindness, the description of the prison camp interiors, the grisly fate of the Russian prisoners, the ravenous orgies on the arrival of the first food consignments—all these are told vividly and with some power.

Unfortunately one suspects that Sergeant Halyburton's ability to articulate such experience, and at times even to feel its more poignant details, has been limited. I should guess that Mr. Goll has supplied both atmosphere and detail; if not, there is at least a quality of journalistic competence, an ironing out of incisive light and shadow in the interest of what approaches melodrama, which definitely detract from the value of the book. Mr. Dos Passos's "Three Soldiers" and Lawrence Stalling's "Plumes" achieve a reality in fiction which "Shoot and Be Damned" as a supposedly factual record, does not approach. Also, one definitely suspects exaggeration if not manufacture. The episode of the Russian girl disguised as an officer to whom the hero crawls through a barbed wire entanglement, to be rewarded by a night of love, lacks the ring of reality. But the strangeness of such truth or fiction can only be taken at face value.

One could wish that more than eight pages had been devoted to the post-war experience entitled "Prisoner of Peace." Here are materials for an American "Road Back." They bear the stamp of reality, and are psychologically moving. But the authors have made them no more than an effective staccato conclusion to the longer and grayer narrative of the life within German walls.

A Strip of History

THE INVASION. A Narrative of Events Concerning the Johnston Family of St. Mary's. By JANET LEWIS. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1932. $2.

WORKING from the traditions, oral and written, of an old family of the city now called Sault Ste. Marie, Miss Lewis has produced more than the history of a family, or even of a locality. It is a strip, narrow but long, of the history of the United States embodied in the living individuals of successive generations, colored by the author's rare sensitiveness to climate and landscape, and to the temperament of diverse races. The family in question sprang from the marriage of the daughter of Waub-ojeeg, the Ojibway chieftain, to John Johnston, gentleman, who came from Northern Ireland at the end of the eighteenth century to engage in the fur trade. The family record is unusually full; John Johnston's eldest daughter married Henry Schoolcraft who collected the Ojibway legends in which Longfellow found the material for "Hiawatha," and the family was visited by that very articulate traveler, Mrs. Anna Jameson. The personal recollections of John Johnston's granddaughter, who died a few years ago at a great age, seem to have contributed a good deal of material; but all that would have amounted to little but for Miss Lewis's skill and charm. She can breathe the breath of life into dry bones, she can realize the personalities of eighteenth-century *coureurs des bois* and Indians almost untouched by the white man's culture, and can follow the changing modes of life and thought from generation to generation. If she does not write novels, she ought to.

In a sense, the book is a paradigm of the history of the United States, from the primeval forest to modern industrialism; but the story of the extrusion and decay of the Indians, tragic enough anywhere, is not quite so uncomfortable reading here as the white man usually finds it. For which a good deal of thanks is due to the tact and sympathy of the Johnston family.

Jerome K. Jerome's "Three Men in a Boat" is being screened in England.

. . . Fenimore Cooper was undoubtedly one of the worst American writers who ever attained prominence. And he is, I have heard, the American novelist who is best known in Europe. And Poe is the American poet who is best known abroad. Poe's best things are wonderful, but his worst things are still the most popular, not his peculiar magic. There is possibly no worse poem in any language than "The Raven"; cheap, gaudy, childishly sensational, and gaumed all over with sticky rhetoric. "The Raven" is like the red plush furniture in the parlor of an old-fashioned country hotel; and even when the hotel was new, it was red plush furniture. And you possibly remember the line from "Annabel Lee": *The moon never beams without bringing me dreams,* etc. A tinkle which sinks to the level of the average popular song writer.

But I suppose Europe will go on picking the worst stuff of American writers, and considering it the best, and judging of American writing in that way; in fact, some of my own worst things have attracted considerable attention over there, and at my worst I am pretty bad. And at my best . . . go ahead and say it: I left the opening just to cheer you up.

Don Marquis

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The BOWLING GREEN

Human Being

XXXVI. WORSE THAN DEATH

JENNY'S vacation in the world of Worse Than Death (she says the phrase is an exaggeration) lasted only three days. She begged to be allowed to come back to work. "The guy's money has run out," she reported by telephone, "but he says he's got a hunk of it coming in soon. He likes me. But I'm fed up; fun's fun, but I don't enjoy this drinking with a purpose. My Mother says she'll put me on the street if I come home sozzled again. Not only that, you'll be losing a good switchboard lady. That man'll have me farmed out to a music show. Yesterday I had to put on rompers and line up with a crowd of janes doing chorus exercises for some director. I'm stiff as an old typewriter. On top of that he takes me to some joint to do tango. You know there's something amusing about that bird, otherwise I couldn't have stuck it."

"Did you get any dope?" insisted Minnie relentlessly.

"Not chapter and verse, but I think I got a slant. He's done R. R. dirt some time or other, no question about that. I kept saying I couldn't see how R. R. could be so heartless, to throw me out on my ear and cetera. 'Don't mind that poor simp,' he says, 'we'll even him up. He's just a boob. I put it across him once and I can do it again.' It was something that happened when they were in the theatre together."

"Well, come on back to the job," said Minnie. "I'll give the Great Lover a fine twist if he drops in and sees you there."

"He wants to see *you*," said Jenny. "Say, a swell time was had tearing *you* to pieces. He's great on the subject. But he thinks you've got a grand figure. I was quite jealous. How did he get to know about that mole?"

"By accident," said Minnie sharply. "See you tomorrow. Try to look a little pale and ruined if you can, because you're supposed to have been sick. And for the love of mike keep your trap shut."

They decided to consult Mr. Gall. Fortunately Richard was down town on a long conference that day; they were able to smuggle the accountant out of the office at lunch time without arousing comment. Mr. Gall's tiffin was usually limited to a sandwich and a pot of tea in the drugstore downstairs; he knew his weaknesses and did not trust himself in speakeasies. After his sandwich he would take a placid stroll round Madison Square, sometimes feeding the pigeons, sometimes chatting with idlers on the benches. It was really singular, he once remarked, how many Dublin men he had met there.

But this time he saw with apprehensive pleasure that he was being taken to what he called a dram-shop. "Now Mr. Gall," said Minnie when they were comfortably in a quiet corner, "take something with plenty of courage in it, because you're going to get some severe shocks."

He looked at them shyly, suspecting a joke. Minnie was demure and official in a trim tailored suit; Jenny had perhaps rather overdone the instruction of pallor. She had chosen that day to go fluffy; she was a picture of wistful innocence, her small bosom defended by a frill of lace, her eyes like moist velvet.

"What is the nature of the shock?" he asked. "Is it moral or fiscal?"

"Moral," said Jenny promptly.

"Possibly both," said Minnie.

"Straight gin, I think," he suggested.

They told him the story, abating nothing. Mr. Gall, like most elderly hermits, rather fancied himself as a referee of irregularity, but he was sincerely horrified. He sneezed nervously, fidgeted with his pipe, and called for more gin. He seemed disposed to linger unduly on phases of the problem which the girls deemed irrelevant.

"Stop twittering," said Minnie. "Let's get on with the argument. "The thing that matters now is to slip a banana peel under Shad's foot."

"You're quite right," he said. "Life's made a monkey out of me, I'd hate to see it happen to Richard."

"Do you know anyone who knows anything about the time they were in the show business together?"

Mr. Gall quit being flabbergasted philosopher and put his shrewd mind on the problem.

"Don't think so. That was a long while ago; I don't often hear him speak of it. Miss McCoy might suggest someone; or how about the old German lady—what's her name, Mrs. Geschwindt?"

"Good idea," said Minnie.

But Mr. Gall evidently had more on his mind. He coughed, mopped his forehead and looked very unhappy.

"I didn't suppose I'd ever mention a thing of this sort," he said. "You know the cupboard in Mr. Roe's room, where he hangs his hat and coat. On the top shelf in there he has a big package of papers. One day he had a lot of them spread out on the table and I couldn't help seeing that there were box office statements, old programs and other theatrical papers. Of course I didn't make any comment, but he gave me a folder of auditors' figures and asked me to look over them. He said it was confidential, but he wanted my opinion. Theatrical book-keeping isn't my line, and some of the analysis was hard to follow, but I could tell from some of the entries that there had been trouble."

"What sort of trouble?" Minnie asked.

"I don't feel at liberty to say. This is very unprofessional anyway.— I asked Mr. Roe if he didn't think those papers should be put in the safe; he said no, they had nothing to do with the stationery business and ought to be kept separate."

"He always keeps that cupboard locked," said Minnie. "I used to wonder why he was so careful of his hat and coat, and then I supposed it was because he keeps a bottle of Scotch in there.— Well, you've got to say this much: was it the kind of trouble that would help the present situation, or hurt it, if I knew about it?"

Mr. Gall was reluctant to answer. "I've always got into hot water just by trying to be helpful," he mumbled. "I gave Mr. Roe my pledge of secrecy. The worst of it is, among those papers he gave me were some memoranda that I think he'd forgotten were there. I said nothing about them, he didn't even know I'd seen them."

"You're the damnedest old woman," Minnie said angrily. "Our only idea is to help Roe, isn't it? This bad smell in the papers, was it creditable to him or not?"

"Oh most creditable, entirely creditable I should judge—to his heart anyway; maybe not to his judgment. Yes, if you were to see them it would ease your mind. It would be helpful."

"I'll see them, all right. I'll have a locksmith in there tonight and get that cupboard open—yes, even if I have to use Jenny as bait."

Mr. Gall was greatly disturbed. "Really —this is atrocious—I cannot make myself responsible for any more violations of ethics. If Mr. Roe sees that things have been tampered with he'll know I've broken my word. The only virtue of an accountant is his absolute discretion."

"You're not very tactful," said Jenny. "After what we've told you, to sit there and talk about virtue."

"Waiter, bring the check," said Minnie.

(*To be continued*)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

DUST STORM—FLATIRON BUILDING.
From a painting by John Sloan reproduced in "John Sloan," by Guy Pène du Bois (Whitney Museum of American Art).

Conqueror of a World

ALEXANDER THE GREAT. By ULRICH WILCKEN. Translated by G. C. RICHARDS. New York: The Dial Press. 1932. $5.

Reviewed by C. A. ROBINSON, JR.
Brown University

ISLAMIC research has now been carried far enough so that one may say authoritatively, "without Alexander the Great no Islamic civilization." This sounds almost incredible, but anyone who reads the brilliant book under review, written by a great scholar for the general public, will be carried far toward an understanding of the one man produced by antiquity (with the exception of Jesus Christ) who did more to shape future ages than any other person.

The growth of an historical perspective by the American public is heartening, and the day is not far distant, I dare say, when the private library that boasts a biography of Napoleon will as a matter of course have one of Alexander as well. Our difficulty till now has been twofold. In the first place, we are only just beginning to realize the sweep of history and that our culture cannot repudiate its connection with the ancient world. Secondly, modern research is at once so recent and, thanks primarily to the archæologists, so swamped with new material that specialists have difficulty in finding time to acquaint the general public with new discoveries.

Alexander in particular has been misunderstood. Textbooks used to end with his death, and he was generally regarded as the executioner of Greek liberty. This conception is changing, because now in studying a man or a period we look for more than mere battles or narrow political institutions, interesting and important as they are. The significance of Alexander may be summed up in Wilcken's happy phrase, "he levelled the way for the development of Greek culture into a world-culture." At the time of Alexander's birth (356 B.C.) the political unit of the Greeks, theoretically at least, was the small city-state. The intellectual and artistic flowering of the Greeks, the most gifted people thus far produced by the Indo-European race, had, it is true, occurred under this city-state, but by Alexander's time wars and other troubles had so reduced the Greeks that their very existence was almost at stake. Because of his incomparable personality, his absolute confidence in himself, his mysticism, his undoubted military genius, the young Macedonian was able to overthrow the Persian empire and carry his arms into India. As always, the empire had first to be created. But Alexander had constantly in mind the administration of this empire (and he was aiming at real world conquest, as few have done). He saw, for one thing, the emptiness of Aristotle's teaching that Greeks were better than barbarians; if Alexander did not aim at a universal world fraternity, he planned at least the fusion of the dominant races in his empire, the Macedonian and the Iranian. Exploration and an opportunity to aid the sciences were ever in his mind. But above all, he intended to give the world one culture, Greek.

Now the important thing is that in large measure he succeeded. It is not so very important for us that Alexander's life resulted in Greek art influencing Japanese painting and sculpture, extraordinary as that is. But it is due to Alexander that our own Western civilization is based solidly on the ancient. By making Greek the civilization of the Eastern world, Rome became Hellenized and thus it has been passed on to us. Fascinating, I think, are the great forces in history. What counts in the history of the world is the conquest of Rome by Hellenism, just as at different times the purpose of the Bactrian Kingdom and the Byzantine Empire was to prevent the barbarians from sweeping it away. The man who made this Greek civilization possible for world adoption was Alexander. His biography by Wilcken is a brilliant piece of work and the best in the field.

Across South America

SOUTH AMERICA. Lights and Shadows. Translated from the German of Kasimir Edschmid. Bl OAKLEY WILLIAMS. New York: The Viking Press. 1932. $5.

THE "travel-book," slightly suspect in some quarters as a sort of mongrel *genre* between serious discussion and frank impressionism, has no terrors, evidently, for Herr Edschmid. Quite the contrary. He relishes the type, not to say "glorifies" it, by inventing a character named "Goehrs," who sees people and things, indulges in dialogues with all and sundry, and plays a constant stream of sprightly enough, if somewhat banal soliloquy, on the passing scene—all in the third person.

Goehrs starts in with Venezuela and Curaçao, and proceeds by way of the Canal and Peru down to Chile, then over to Buenos Aires and up the east coast again. Goehrs sees all the usual things, from the high Cordillera to opera in Buenos Aires, meets all sorts of "types," with whom he gossips and exchanges impressions, reacts to the usual stimuli as might be expected of a well-informed European.

The book is better written than most of its kind and "Goehrs" sees a lot, first and last, and reports it entertainingly. The fictional "hero" would doubtless go down more easily over a mug of beer in some European café than he does as close as this to South America, but his impressions and soliloquys are sound and informing enough.

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China in Books

By C. K. BINKLEY

THIRTY-TWO years ago a Doctor of Laws of the University of Edinburgh in the course of a survey of ancient education focussed his mind in due order upon the "Uro-Altaic or Turanian" races. He observed at once that they have no innate capacity for progress in literature "beyond a certain fixed point"; then, a few pages later, narrowing his scrutiny to the Chinese, he announced that among them "art in the higher sense does not exist" and completed the observation in a footnote upon that form of art in which the essential qualities of a people are supposed to be embodied:

> There are some men (who may be called Sinophils) who speak in laudatory terms of the lyrical literature, just as they exaggerate the intellectual power of the Chinese, but the specimens given, even allowing for the difficulty of translation, do not justify their admiration. They read like the Latin verses of English schoolboys.

I shall not quarel with the author's conclusion; those old attempts to put the Chinese Pegasus between English thills do make melancholy reading. But that is not the point nor are the merits of Chinese poetry itself at issue. At least what seems significant to me is the picture of that British scholar just stepped from the topmost rung of the nineteenth century (a ladder, as everybody except a few chronic grumblers knew, that led straight up to Truth) and there from the vantage ground of the West, from the exalted portion of it named Britain, and, one suspects, with advantage, too, from a certain abstract rarity of Scottish air, equating and evaluating by a sort of divine insight.

Now, a generation later, he stands isolated, the ladder gone, the self-sufficiency of the West considerably reduced together with its prestige, for we have had some hard jolts. Departments of knowledge except those directly concerned with measurements of ability are no longer much interested in his judgments of superiority and inferiority; everywhere they are groping for solid ground, and one by one they are turning for help to their elder brother gropers of the East. The length of publishers' lists reflects this newly aroused sense of the importance of Chinese culture. In their poetry, for instance, the field upon which our scholar deigned especially to glance, one could count a dozen books—translations of the past three or four years, or older ones that by the frequent mention of them, and by reprints, one knows to be alive.

For an attempt: Arthur Waley's "One Hundred and Seventy Poems," reprinted by Knopf in 1929, suggesting also Waley's "More Translations" and his "The Temple." Of the same year is Witter Bynner and Kiang Kang-hu's "The Jade Mountain," Christy's "Images in Jade," the first volume of Florence Ayscough's autobiographical arrangement of the poems of Tu Fu, a consummate artist, counted by the Chinese greatest in the bewilderingly long line of their poets, a reprint of Shigeyosha Obata's translation from Li Po, their best loved, and of Giles's "Gems of Chinese Literature, Prose and Verse," a mine not yet exhausted. A year earlier was the fourth printing of W. J. B. Fletcher's "Gems of Chinese Verse," and of his "More Gems." To these one would add as surely alive the frequently mentioned "Fir Flower Tablets" of Amy Lowell and Florence Ayscough, and Cranmer-Byng's two volumes in "The Wisdom of the East" series—"A Feast of Lanterns" and "A Lute of Jade."

I have given the dozen with a baker's margin, and omitted what is perhaps the most significant of all, the translation by Dr. Lim Boon Keng, President of Amoy College, of the Li Sao, or Ode on Encountering Sorrows. Not to know this poem is not to know China; in it beats the heart of the brave early Confucianism. It is of the latter part of the fourth century B.C. when the Feudal States were being absorbed by the ruthless state of Ch'in, which like a great dragon reared its crest above the moral chaos, sliming everything with guile and crushing the divided states in its pitiless folds. Of the author we know little with certainty; the details of his life were wiped out by the victor. But we know that he stood against the new materialistic order and for the old humanities. Through his death, self-inflicted, to which the poem is a prelude, he became a remembrance, then an inchoate echo, like Linus or Adonis in the Greek Mysteries. It was his body his countrymen sought symbolically in the fantastic regattas of the annual Dragon Festival down to our own times. One can conceive the difficulty of translating anything except the shell of a thing so propelled into a reverberant greatness by imagery and sound as, say, Milton's "Lycidas." The Li Sao is nearer to our conception of a poem, greater in this manner than anything else in Chinese, but more compact of all senses than Milton's poem, and rooted in their traditions deeper than Lycidas in ours. It is Milton plus Keats and Shelley—though not in form, for it has some of the swing of the ballad. "When I first tried to read it, in 1872, the verses seemed to me like flashes of lightning, blinding me so that I could only catch the sense here and there." So the elder Giles, trenchant foe of obscurity—as many a translator and commentator during the past fifty years has learned feelingly—writes in a preface, one of several with which in the Chinese manner this book is equipped, the author modestly leaning on his friends. Mr. Giles ends his preface with a tribute, weighty because it comes from him, to the importance of the book, linking it with C. H. Brewitt-Taylor's translation of the San Kuo romance. "In these days," he writes, "when people assert that the primacy in Chinese studies has been snatched from the British Empire, two such works . . . go far to leave the British Empire exactly where it was." What Mr. Giles had in mind, however, was not the translation itself—that has been done before—but the very complete equipment of aids to its study, as a critical history, a vocabulary, commentaries, a complete glossary of plants especially valuable for this poem, and the Chinese text.

The truth is that publishers on the other side of the Pacific are more helpful than our own to the student. Every book that I have mentioned in my letters as published in China is furnished with the Chinese texts (for translations) or, in the studies, with footnotes of Chinese ideographs to fix equivalents. That we in the West knew the value of these helps the great work of Legge sixty years ago showed. Perhaps we are now beginning to relearn it; an anthology of Tang and Sung poetry translated into German by Professor Alfred Forke, formerly of the University of California, now Director of the School for Chinese Language and Culture of Hamburg, has just come to my desk together with a volume of later print, as if by afterthought, of the Chinese texts of the poems. In our country, too, the University of Chicago has announced for early publication in the International Understanding Series "Chinese Poems in English Rhyme," by Admiral Tsai Ting-Kan, in which each poem will be accompanied by the Chinese text—a significant book, as the description by Berthold Laufer, Nestor of American sinologists, shows.

As to the translation itself of the "Li Sao," to return to that poem, if one expects from Dr. Lim's rather literal blank verse an artistic satisfaction such as one gets from the Book of Ruth, the Odyssey of Pope or Palmer, or the Greek laments, he will be disappointed. But there in its pages is the material in good, readable English for whoever can to make what he will of it. The "Li Sao" to a Chinese steeped in his own past is not so much a succession of ideograms as a sort of exaltation. Really to transfer it will be impossible until we also are steeped in the Chinese reader's traditions.

Thus far the Chinese poetry that has been translated into English supremely well has come in bits like crystals. Exceptions thus far have come to their success adventitiously, or, as in Helen Waddell's limpid "Chinese Lyrics" selected and rhymed from Lege's pioneering prose translation of the Shi King, they have been chosen from the earlier naive Chinese verse, in that way fitting our own poetic immaturity. For the main body of Chinese poetry is old beyond ours and rich with the second naiveté of wisdom, which the earlier translators shockingly violated by dilution for rhythm and for the tagging on of rhymes. The Imagists of our own times simulated a maturity that drew them toward the Chinese, but not to them, and so the translations of the 1920's still fall happily on the ear of the 1930's, if not of the ages. Perhaps all the later translations have slipped in adventitiously under the attraction of this movement, but I have in mind collections like "The Jade Mountain," an anthology of Tang poems arranged in Chinese in the late seventeenth century. That book does have for me some magic of finality, not so much as mere gems strung together as because in it the great Tang times pass before my eyes more really than in any history, and yet somehow mellowed and reduced as in a picture because seen through the lens of the ripe classic age of Khanghsi. Mrs. Ayscough's Tu Fu gets some of this value in another way.

More personal is the success achieved in "The Lost Flute," a translation by Gertrude Joerrissen, of Franz Toussaint's translation into French of complete poems and fragments from a wide range of Chinese. I can imagine the delight of some novice in Chinese, a lover of beauty, who should discover this book. The succession of subjects and moods, poetically, not logically conceived; the delicate rhythms of its prose, a medium not quite so amenable to fashion as verse; its very titles, still in the French and by that softened into a strangeness impossible in the stark romanization of Wade; these and the mechanical composition of the book all blend into a thing of sheer beauty, but not, I warn, for the mere sinologist.

Not adventitious but a weaving of the background itself into the poem is the procedure of Maude Meagher in "White Jade," the story of Yang Kuei-Fei and Ming Huang her royal lover in the splendor of the Tang and its fall, a story as glowing and as intensely tragic as our own Paolo and Francesca. In Miss Meagher's pages the story is unfolded delicately and surely.

But if one begins to compute merits, how shall he avoid being himself left as a landmark on a hillock of 1932?

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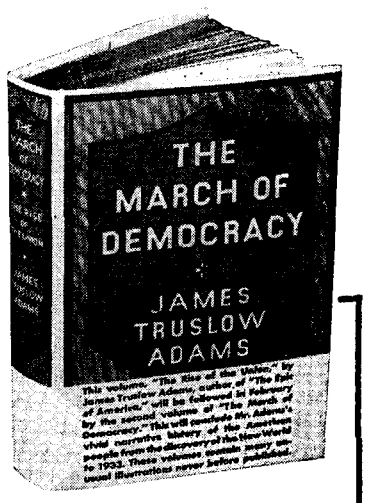

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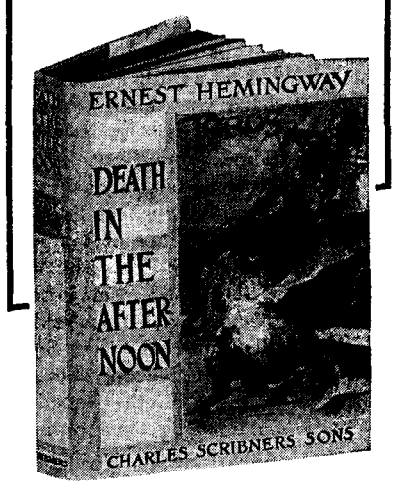

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Belles Lettres

UNCOLLECTED LECTURES. By RALPH WALDO EMERSON. Edited by CLARENCE GOHDES. Rudge. 1932.

Six of these lectures were delivered on successive Sunday evenings, January to November, 1864-5, and were reported at some length, though selectively, in the *Commonwealth*, a Boston weekly. The seventh was a Sunday afternoon address on "Natural Religion" given in 1869. It is distinctly the most important, and is substantially as Emerson wrote it. The next in importance is possibly the first lecture, on "Public and Private Education," and was reported at greater length than the other five. The language is everywhere Emerson's, except for parts (in parentheses) that were condensed by reporters or editors. The address on "Natural Religion" is "the most complete statement of Emerson's religious beliefs made during his later years." The editor is sedulous, and quite right of course, in noting where a sentence or idea has appeared in essays already published. But Emerson put the same ideas in many forms and places. In a sense he is constantly repeating himself, because he is so constantly himself. As to using the same sentence in several places, he was always drawing on his notebooks and journals, and even if he happened to notice it, he probably saw no objection to saying the same thing again, provided it struck him as well said. Everything of Emerson's has value, and the Emersonian quality is nowhere more distinct than in these late gleanings. We may not agree with an Emersonian sentence, but we always feel its impact. If he had been born a hundred years later, his angle and position would no doubt have been different, but one cannot help wishing that he were here, and talking to us of things as they look now with that same imperturbable virility.

Fiction

FOUR BLIND MICE. By DONALD JOSEPH. Stokes. 1932. $2.

This novel makes judicious appraisal even more difficult to arrive at than usual. Superficially considered, Mr. Joseph has done a good job; he knows his craft, he writes well, he has an interesting tale to tell. "Four Blind Mice" is concerned with an analysis of the tangled emotions and lives of Lucius Deering, his wife Kay, and Lucius's best friend, Julien Dureau. In the end it resolves itself into a triangle, commonplace but unhackneyed — or rather a quadrangle, for Lucius's son Neville figures largely in the cross-motives of the narrative.

Conceived and executed with outstanding sincerity, the book tempts the reviewer to put in a good word for it, but there is something vastly wrong here. Discount the long passages when the reader's interest will stagnate, discount the extremely accurate account of emotional scenes that in life possess great validity and power to move. This much remains: the account of these scenes (and they form the backbone of the book), in their minute detail, in their accurate observation, still touches only the surface of the emotions involved. It is almost impossible for the reader to feel himself into any of the situations the author has portrayed, still more impossible to sit outside and contemplate them without the desire to be moved, hence the interest flags and the characters move on their way like shadows cast on a screen, possessing no emotional validity despite the author's obvious sympathy and meticulous transposition of incident.

THE FANATICS. By CHARLES BONNER, JR. Mohawk Press. 1932. $2.

At the turn of the century the Canterburys still lived on their vast estate in upper New York, in a condition that bore more than a remote resemblance to a benevolent feudal state. They were happy and their retainers, dependents, and tenants were happy with them in the enjoyment of good food, good wine, good treatment, and consideration. Sydney Canterbury hoped to see the succession pass into the hands of his elder son Guy, but Guy was determined to become a doctor. This was the first blow; others followed in swift succession, largely through the activities of the Reverend Spooner, militant evangelist and sworn foe of human enjoyment. Through him Corinth grew into a flourishing industrial town of fanatical Christers and boosters, dependence on the soil waned, and the old man's dissatisfaction found expression in his testament, which decreed the liquidation of the estate.

From then on the Canterburys went slowly downhill. Daughter Harriet, her vision bent on another world, married the evangelist and seconded his attempts to destroy all that makes life sweet and bearable. Young son Ives took his father's liberality too seriously to heart and became a chronic alcoholic. By the end of the book Harriet is in a fair way to become an inmate of an institution, yet thousands of her ilk still walk the streets of thousands of our cities, making life miserable for the easy-going.

Mr. Bonner's first novel is a creditable performance; in future work he will undoubtedly stress the creation of character and abandon what remains a purely circumstantial, though thoroughly entertaining, account of passing events. His motivation will be sounder and his people leave a deeper impress on the mind. Also perhaps he, and other beginning writers, will take a determined stand against their publishers' well-intentioned but ill-advised hyperbolic blurbs. It can help him little to have his sincerely contrived but as yet far from superlative work hailed as the product of "a writer bordering on genius," for certainly "The Fanatics" displays no trace of that oft-cited but still rarely-encountered attribute.

VALIANT DUST. By P. C. WREN. Stokes. 1932. $2.

Another light and pleasant tale of the Foreign Legion by the author of the well-known "Beaux" and "Geste" books, for readers who prefer to do their adventuring in the Sahara from an armchair.

All the familiar trappings are here once more; the devil-may-care *Légionnaires*, the lovely lady in distress, the impregnable fortress ruled by the cruel Kaid, with its secret doors, winding, gloomy stone staircases; the intrigues, suspicions, spies, and counterspies. Major Wren makes no pretence to provide more than this light fare—a cleverer and more modern version of E. M. Hull's "The Sheik"—and as an entertainer *à la mode*, he is adept and ingenious.

NINE MONTHS. Translated from the German of Hilda Maria Kraus. By NORMAN GULLICK. Liveright, Inc. New York: 1932. $2.

Frau Olga Calvius, after ten years of uneventful but contented married life, suddenly discovered that she was going to have a baby.

She taught in a girl's high school in Vienna and her rather priggish husband lectured in the University. She and Leopold were happy enough in their prosy, middle-class groove, and quite unaware that they were missing anything important, least of all, children. They had a comfortable flat and a maid, were able to spend their summers somewhere in the country, and they liked to gather with a little group of their old friends, Viennese-fashion, for an evening's gossip in one of the friendly old cafés.

It is often urged that women have the worst of bringing children into the world. Less frequently is the point made that there may be gains as well as losses in their biological responsibilities, and that looked at from this point of view, the woman may well have the best of it. It is this point which Miss Kraus brings out in her very likable little novel.

The astounding news about the child reached the couple just as they were about to start on a summer vacation trip to Greece. It seemed better, on the whole, for the wife not to go, but she was very sporting about it and said that she could go off by herself somewhere to a quiet place nearby so that Leopold's holiday shouldn't be spoiled. The trip was very important to the husband because he was going to write one of his books about it. Thus their ways parted, Leopold remaining the same old third-rate esthete, while Olga, although herself unaware of it at first, went pioneering into a new world. She hated the notion of the child, at first, and the tumult within her was deflected into a brief, harmless, but quite breath-taking love-affair with a rather heavy-handed young labor leader who happened to be stopping in the same village where Olga went to spend her vacation. In her old routine, she would never have met such a man. Her own physical disabilities, and the arrangements she was able to make, thanks to being a public school teacher, for getting pay for most of the time she would be away from her job, made her think seriously, for the first time, about prospective mothers less fortunately situated. In short, she became a different sort of person, mentally as well as physically, and much better fitted than the apparently lucky and carefree Leopold to fit into the post-war, post-revolutionary, Viennese world.

Through her simplicity and directness, and the honesty with which she hitches biology and psychology together, the author succeeds in pointing her moral without sentimentality or seeming to preach. It is an unaffected, sincere sort of story, which has the air of being written about a real woman; the author herself, or some other woman whom she knew very well.

PEACE BROKE OUT. By HEINZ LIEPMANN. Smith & Haas. 1932. $2.50.

The German "Inflation" was a period of crashing values of all sorts, of jumpy nerves, depression and general disillusion and hopelessness. A certain echo of the time is felt in the manner as well as the matter of Herr Liepmann's story, but little more than that. The novel is vague and spotty; its people, for the most part, without body or roots. In the pages of one of the German newspapers to which the young author contributes, its chapters might go well enough as a serial story. They scarcely have vitality enough to survive translation and a trip across the Atlantic.

Miscellaneous

THE DISAPPEARING CITY. By FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT. Payson. 1932.

It is perhaps regrettable that Mr. Wright did not confine himself more closely to the sober problem of the city and its architectural future. He is a great architect, but hardly a competent oracle on sociology, historical or prospective. The "Broadacre," or distributed city, is an active idea in current thought, but so far the "new architecture" has not worked in its favor; rather the reverse. Steel construction makes tall buildings possible. Tall buildings put more people than ever on an acre. The traffic *impasse* that results from this and from the swarming automobile may eventually force some kind of reaction toward distribution. But up to date the signs are not encouraging for oracles. The suburb and its commuter constitute a somewhat distributed residence and an appalling phenomenon of traffic.

A Broadacre City is defined as one where the normal ground space per family is one acre. Mr. Wright sees the source of the city in a primitive division of mankind into two: those who found safety in mobility (hunters and herdsmen probably) and those who sought it in caves and, by and by, walled towns. Civilization grew up on the basis of the latter; hence all this packing and discomfort, stationary forms, and swarms of white collar parasites. But mankind has never wholly lost the taste for freedom and mobility. It seems to be nowadays seeking its salvation on wheels. Mr. Wright's forecasts are interesting, and there is no trouble in agreeing with him that modern cities are becoming too big and too congested, that there is too much in modern social conditions that does not make sense.

POLAND AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR. By *Mièciolaus Haiman*. Chicago: Polish Roman Catholic Union of America.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

"Now you're there," writes R. K. W., who collects contemporary cook-books, "you might tell me if there is a really good, workable recipe book for characteristic British cookery adaptable to American conditions."

HA! Watch me. There are two; both are recent and I own them both. One has been lately published in the United States by Random House: it is the Nonesuch Press's already famous "Lovely Food," compiled by Ruth Lowinsky. This is sophisticated; the table decorations, indicated in the headpieces, would take most people's minds off the meals. The recipes, gathered "for ourselves and our greedier friends," are arranged for occasions; for instance: "It is useful occasionally to have a cold or semi-cold supper, which the cook can prepare before she goes out, and which can be easily served from a lift without the parlor maid. Many guests possess that infallible sign of good breeding: complete oblivion to the presence of servants. This often causes their less well-bred hostess acute discomfort, for good servants are not so plentiful that one can afford to shock them. But if we wait on ourselves we can enjoy with a calm mind the raciest conversation." Another proof that financial stringency has its charms. This menu, by the way, is spinach soup, herring salad, cutlets in aspic, and strawberry shortcake, which I grieve to admit is made out of cake instead of biscuit dough (and when I say biscuit I mean biscuit not Peak and Frean) and served cold. But then, most Americans commit this practically inexcusable solecism. Another menu is "suitable to some French friends who are convinced that the art of cooking is unknown in England. Be careful that none of the items are French," and one is to produce a favorable impression on a father-in-law, while over at the back is a luscious department of Superlative Foodthings for which you go to special restaurants, who have here yielded up some of their secrets.

But the other is even more enticing: critics have called it "the most romantic cook-book ever written," and yet it is a perfectly good kitchen companion. It is "Good Things in England," by Florence White, founder of the English Folk Cookery Association, and Cape publishes it at six shillings. Along with directions for today's dishes you can get anywhere you may find a Cheshire Pork Pie of the great Mrs. Glasse, but with the grand manner of that confusing authority reduced to simple consecutive statements and if you want to cook as they did a long time ago, you will have to employ some such interpreter as Mrs. White. Along with the directions you get data like John Pollack's report that when he was young a knowing man or boy always put a meat pasty in his pocket when going for a day's tramp on Dartmoor, and here's the point—its shape was that of two Phrygian caps joined at the base, a quarter moon with blunted horns—in short, the emblem of Phœnician Astarte. Well, I would not be surprised at anything on Dartmoor, and as for Phœnicians, how did Irish jewelry get into the court of Ur of the Chaldees in the days of Abraham, as lately disclosed by eminent archæologists?

And if you are going into historical cooking in a serious way, the next time you visit London go to the Patent Office Library, 25 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, E.C.4, any weekday until nine in the evening, and consult the fine collection of Old English Cookery Books.

M. M., Great Notch, N. J., plans to devote one season of a study club to the work of women writers of international fame, and asks me to choose a German novelist. My own choice would be Clara Viebig, because the social and economic problems she chooses to discuss are more likely to be within the purview of this group than the historic or erotic romanticism—of a distinctly Germanic type—of Richarda Huch. Clara Viebig's novels have been slow in reaching us in English, and my own favorites have not reached us yet, but "The Woman with a Thousand Children" (Appleton) is a study of a Berlin slum school teacher with a strong vocation for her work, to which indeed she sacrifices her personal happiness; it is less sentimental than Fraprié's "La Maternelle" and quite as sympathetic. Her "The Golden Hills" (Vanguard) is laid in the Moselle region during the post-war period. Gabrielle Reuter's "Daughters" (Macmillan) shows a generation of women dislodged from their corset-like conventions and slumping badly in every direction; it is remarkably impartial in its attitude to old and new morality. Vicki Baum is already on the list of this reading circle: her "Secret Sentence" (Doubleday, Doran) is the latest of her novels to reach us in translation.

R. P., Alexandria, Ohio, asks for books about Liberia, its economics, geography, social conditions, and especially its history. He says that a publication by Thomas H. B. Walker, "The Presidents of Liberia," Mintz Printing Co., Jacksonville, Fla., is the only reference he has located and even that book he can't find, the publishers having apparently gone out of business. There have been three books in quite recent years: "Through Liberia," by D. R. M. Mills, appeared in 1927; "The Land of the Pepper Bird," by Sidney De La Rue (Putnam), a descriptive work with many stories of native life, last year. "Liberia—Old and New," by James L. Sibley and D. Westermann, was published by Doubleday, Doran in 1928; this gives the history of the cultural and economic development of the state and the story of the original tribal organization that it has succeeded. The first prize in the recent James Weldon Johnson poetry competition for young colored poets was won by a youth from Liberia with a group of poems of native life so vigorous and sensitive that I suggest you ask Miss Jessie Bosley, who conducts these prize competitions of the league, at the West 135th Street Public Library, New York, to let you have a copy.

I. H. B., Memphis, Tenn., and A. L. W., Jefferson City, Tenn., ask for advice on the selection of authors for a season's club program of modern literature and poetry of the South. The latter wishes the program to be brought to a close with a program devoted to the theme "As Others See Us," which will set forth criticism of the South by outsiders pro and con. A. L. W. is also especially interested in plays and poetry. The authors to whom I would devote especial attention, were I a member of this program committee, are Ellen Glasgow—and what an artist she is!—Julia Peterkin, DuBose Heyward, Roark Bradford, Mary Johnston, James Branch Cabell, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, Irvin Cobb, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, and Stark Young. Of the beginners, I would keep an eye on Alberta Pierson Hannum, who wrote "Thursday April" (Harper) last year and has lately completed her second novel; the first was a West Virginia story of unusual vigor and freshness. I would look out for historical romances of Southern life: Hergesheimer's "The Limestone Tree" (Knopf), the sequence of novels by T. S. Stribling of which "The Forge" and "The Store" have appeared (Doubleday, Doran), and the group of four novelettes by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Larocque Tinker, "Old New Orleans" (Appleton), with Mr. Tinker's "Toucoutou" and the historical novels of Mary Johnston, of which the latest is "Hunting Shirt" (Little, Brown), its scene the Virginian frontier in Indian days. I would pay especial attention to the new Negro poetry, which has so broken from the sentimental tradition as to give an effect of extraordinary spontaneity.

M. T., Iowa, has been for three years trying to find the authors of three poems quoted in "Daedalus," by J. D. Haldane (Dutton): "There's many a strong farmer whose heart would break in two. If he could see the townland that we are coming to"; "Though in black jet it bows and nods"; and "Black is his robe from top to toe" are the first lines.

Fortunately I don't have to look these up; the author of "Daedalus" must have had many such requests, for to the fifth impression of the English edition he added a note to say that the three quotations were respectively from "The Happy Townland," by William Butler Yeats, Chesterton's "Ballad of the White Horse," and Buchanan's "Book of Orme," adding that Buchanan was a mystical Presbyterian minister and "perhaps the greatest poet produced by Scotland during the last

(*Continued on page* 152)

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What the SATURDAY REVIEW *most desires for this department is the pithy paragraph upon some significant matter, whether in relation to authors' activities, bookselling activities and problems, the trend of reading in a particular territory, or allied matters. Bookseller's anecdotes will be welcomed. It is our aim to furnish a bird's-eye view of reading and writing America which will prove valuable both to our subscribers and to the book world at large. We hope that our subscribers will submit items from time to time.*

CALIFORNIA

Car Menn, from Oakland, contributes bookshop and library indications:—

The clerk in one bookshop told me that dictionaries and encyclopedias are in great demand. He slyly suggested with a lowered tone and great wrinkling of forehead that the so-called taboo books even in the dollar reprint editions were not selling. He said that their really best sellers in the used books were the old favorites in fiction of about twenty and twenty-five years ago. At the Public Library in the Juvenile Section, they carry on a contest to have the children report on the books they like during vacation. It suggests a good guide to proper Christmas presents for cherubs.

NEW JERSEY

Again we hear from *Lorenz F. Heller* who gives us new information from across the River:—

The Jersey reading public is really buying books. *J. B. Priestley's* "Faraway," is running on as pretty a breeze as blew "Angel Pavement" and "The Good Companions" into snug harbors, even in the original English edition. High on the list of collectors' items is *D. H. Lawrence's "Apocalypse,"* published in an extremely limited edition by G. Orioli in Italy. The depression has nothing to do with James Branch Cabell who is still being avidly collected in these parts. Bibliophiles should take note that two reasonably rare editions of *Izaak Walton's* "Compleat Angler" are now offered at The Book Shop in Newark. One is a first Moses Brown edition of 1750 in a half leather Riviere binding. The second is a miniature, a beautiful hand-tooled, Morocco green, gold leaf inlay binding by Kelly & Sons done in 1825, a first Pickering edition which boasts steel engravings.

And—your correspondent is writing a novel for which absolutely no publisher is dickering!

OHIO

Here is a personal item of much flavor from *Katherine Garford Thomas:*—

Recently I called upon my neighbor and friend in Elyria, Mrs. William G. Sharp, whose husband was American Ambassador to France during the World War. "The War Memoirs of *William Graves Sharp*" were edited by his friend Mr. Warrington Dawson and the volume is published in London by Constable. Mr. Sharp started his memoirs, from his journal, on the Sharps's return to America in 1919. They sailed for Europe in the summer of 1922 and Mr. Sharp's death occurred that Autumn within two weeks after his return to Elyria. In reminiscing, Mrs. Sharp spoke of Mr. Sharp's election to an honorary membership in the Astronomic Society of France, his sponsors being President Poincaré and Camille Flammarion. Mr. Sharp had always been greatly interested in astronomy, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to have his friends in Elyria visit his home on a clear evening and gaze at the heavens through his telescope. Mrs. Sharp repeated the words of the great Joffre after hearing of Mr. Sharp's death,—"c'est un grande honnête homme."

NEBRASKA

Helen Geneva Masters adds this to her former contribution from the state named by the Omahas' description of the "wide river" Platte:—

Back in 1924 when the creative youth movement was getting under way a writing course was initiated and has been conducted ever since by *Miss Sara Vore Taylor.* Several of her gifted students have continued writing since graduation. You may have enjoyed occasionally lyrics by *Helene Margaret* or *Lee Weber* in *Harpers* or the *Forum,* and you may recall that incisive story of our sand-hill country, "Along a Sandy Road,"by *Ellen Bishops.* Mr. O'Brien reprinted it from *Prairie Schooner* for his collection of 1930. Selections from the literary product of the first six years of "English Nine" have recently been published in a volume quaintly entitled "Word-Hoard," (fourteen hundred copies sold in Omaha!)

LOUISIANA

Here is what *Lois K. Pelton* has culled in Louisiana:—

There is keen interest throughout Louisiana in *Grace King's* "Memoirs of a Southern Woman of Letters," published by Macmillan. Bookstores have been besieged already with orders for the book. The fame of Grace King's work, her intimate friendships with many of the greatest writers of the age and her charming personality make interest in her last book widespread. A dramatic fact connected with the "Memoirs" is that the author lived just long enough to complete the book. When it was finished, Miss King remarked: "My work is complete," not knowing that her life was to end with it. Many persons cherish the memory of the beautiful white hair, the keen, dark eyes and the aristocratic bearing of the author of "Balcony Stories," "The Pleasant Ways of St. Medard," "New Orleans, the Place and the People" and numerous other books.

Lyle Saxon, Apostle of Louisiana Romance, makes his bow as a novelist with "Children of Strangers," published by the Century Co. this autumn. Mr. Saxon, the author of "Father Mississippi," "Fabulous New Orleans," "Old Louisiana," and "Lafitte the Pirate," is a well known authority on the Vieux Carré (New Orleans's old Latin quarter) and the great Louisiana plantations of the past. Orleanians always associate him with the Quarter and he is a sort of human landmark down there.

Lea Freeman, whose play, "The Widow in Green" appeared on Broadway not long ago, and was published by Samuel French, has written a new play. The title and theme are a dark secret as yet, but it is reported that he has gone to California to consider moving picture offers for it.

All those who have enjoyed *Emmett Kennedy's* inimitable negro stories will be interested in the report that he has just completed the harmonizing of "Eighteen Chinese Melodies." He has been working on them with a gifted young Chinese poet and musician. Speaking of Mr. Kennedy's latest work, recalls an anecdote I recently heard about him. A young New Orleans woman tells me that he once gave a recital of negro stories at the ante-bellum home of her family, on picturesque Bayou St. John. Throughout the recital, an old Creole mammy, who cooked for the family, hovered about the door, intensely interested, but obviously displeased. After Mr. Kennedy's departure, Mammy was asked what she thought of him.

"Humph!" she burst out. "How dat white man know all dat? Anybody think he belong to de Holy Ghost Church! Dey oughta immigrationize dat man to Africa!"

ILLINOIS

Mrs. Keith Preston, widow of the famous wit and light-versifier of *The Chicago Daily News,* sends us these items from the Windy City:—

Lynn Riggs, author of "Green Grow the Lilacs," has been spending the summer at the Northwestern University School of Speech. He directed a production of his play which ran for six nights at the University Theater. Mr. Riggs had the satisfaction of producing a play precisely as the author wished it, heightening spiritual values, as he said, without sacrificing realism. "Curly" was played by *Winston O'Keefe,* who was once a cowboy in the Southwest, and "Laura" by a Texas girl. The cadences of her long speeches alternated with the clipped rhythms of the cowboy choruses making music exactly according to Mr. Riggs's training. Evanston book shops report "Green Grow the Lilacs" as a best seller this summer, with the collection of *Elinor Wylie's* poems leading at Commencement time, and *Lew Sarett* always a very good seller in poetry.

Dr. Tiemen de Vries, whose book on "Evidence on Christianity and Evolution" appeared in June, grew up near Groningen in the Netherlands, and knows well the internment camp mentioned by *Charles Morgan* in the opening pages of "The Fountain." The commandant of the camp, says Dr. de Vries, was an old-fashioned military man, pompous and a martinet, member of a high class Dutch family, with an English wife. The castle where the hero of Mr. Morgan's novel studied and loved, has features of a well-known ancient castle on the shore of a lake near Groningen. The people suggest in some ways persons of the provinces of northeast Holland. From this it seems clear that Morgan's art received some suggestions of landscape and character, and the contrasts of Dutch and English temperament, but has transcended mere copying of real places and people, and avoids the fault that leads to identification possible in some recent works of fiction.

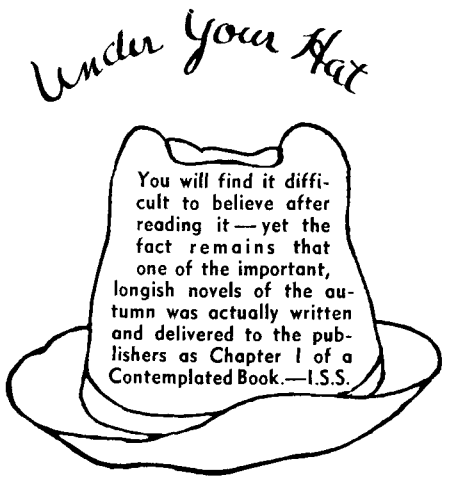
OKLAHOMA

And here are some Oklahoma notes from *Henry T. Chambers,* showing that they're very much on the map out in that region:—

Stanley Vestal, home in Norman from a Guggenheim fellowship in France, with his biography of Sitting Bull being published by Houghton Mifflin this fall, exclaims, "No more biographies!" But he is observed to be collecting Indian material as usual—and as might be expected of a man who has published seven scholarly volumes on "the Old West."

The newest book of poems? "Now That The Hawthorn Blossoms," say we outlanders, by *Althea Bass,* published some months ago by Bruce Humphries in Boston. Mrs. Bass, who lives in Norman, is now in Ireland.

Oklahomans were not greatly surprised to find *Arthur Brisbane* gushing over the play, "Life Begins," a drama of the maternity ward, written by *Mary McDougal Axelson,* very proudly claimed by Salpulpa, Okla. When Mary McDougal was a student at O. U., she sold poems to *The New York Times* with something like regularity.


Under Your Hat
You will find it difficult to believe after reading it—yet the fact remains that one of the important, longish novels of the autumn was actually written and delivered to the publishers as Chapter I of a Contemplated Book.—I.S.S.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Rates: 7 cents per word. Address Personal Dept. Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

SIX-MONTHS' square-rigged sailing ship cruise from Boston early November. Christmas in Mediterranean. Thence west African coast stops to Capetown. Returning via St. Helena. No women. Experienced officers. Cost $550 for those willing assist full crew professional sailors. Also limited passenger space. S. T. Henry, Spruce Pine, N. C.

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SINGLE, non-arty Irish-American, 28, yearns to be secretary, research assistant, trainer, cook, manager, gardener, companion, chauffeur, father confessor, buffer, and general Man Friday to busy writer with healthy sense of humor. I. A.

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The PHŒNIX NEST

THROUGH its secretary, *Mr. Westman,* the well-known Alimony Club, of 434 West 37th Street (New York County Jail), has written to Charles Scribner's Sons requesting a free copy of *Arthur Train's* romantic novel "Princess Pro Tem." "You will naturally understand," concluded Mr. Westman in the last paragraph of his letter to the Scribners, "that the conditions under which inmates are committed here make it impossible to afford purchase." The Scribners sent the book, not, however, without observing that even members of the Alimony Club like their love stories romantic! . . .

We hear that *Ernest Boyd* has adapted for the stage, a long short story, "After the Fireworks," by *Aldous Huxley,* and that it will probably be produced on Broadway this Fall. The story originally appeared in Huxley's "Brief Candles" (Doubleday, Doran), and concerns itself with the adventures of Miles Fanning, the novelist, who didn't run away in time from a late infatuation. . . .

The seventeenth biennial edition of "Who's Who in America" edited by *Albert Nelson Marquis* (so far as we know no relation to *Don!*) has now plunged from the ways, being launched in full cloth, over 2,600 pages at eight dollars and seventy-five cents. Look yourself up in this bulky red tome! Over 3,400 entirely new sketches have been added. . . .

On September tenth Ray Long and Richard R. Smith, Inc. took over the religious and theological titles of the firm of Harper & Brothers, to add to their Religious Book Department of which *Eugene Exman* is in charge. Moffatt's Translations of the Bible in its twenty editions went along; a famous work by *Professor James Moffatt* of Union Theological Seminary. . . .

Brewer, Warren & Putnam seem to be full of red corpuscles—we don't mean red sympathies!—nowadays, as their "Georgia Nigger" of September 30th, a novel by *John L. Spivak,* which has an appendix of testamentary photographs, demonstrates, and "What Happened in the Mooney Case," by *Ernest Jerome Hopkins,* bears out. *Governor Hugh M. Dorsey* of Georgia has said of the conditions revealed in "Georgia Nigger," "To me it seems that we stand indicted as a people before the world. If the conditions indicated by these charges should continue, both God and man would justly condemn Georgia more severely than man and God condemned Belgium and Leopold for the Congo atrocities." Our attitude on the case of *Tom Mooney* has been expressed before. The story of his case has engaged the attention of the entire world. "What Happened in the Mooney Case" is an impartial account by one who was a reporter on the *San Francisco Bulletin* at the time of the famous Preparedness Parade. He was actually in the parade when the bomb exploded and as a reporter covered all phases of the case including the subsequent trials. He has thoroughly studied all the records, including the suppressed Wickersham report. . . .

In November Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, Inc. will bring out *Hudson Strode's* "The Story of Bermuda." The Contenting Islands have now become vastly popular with Americans. "Everyone," says *Owen Johnson,* "who has known Bermuda will read it *con amore.*" Mr. Strode has written variously. His play, "The End of the Dance," won first prize in the National Little Theatre contest in 1929. . . .

Wilbert Snow, who wrote "Maine Coast" and "The Inner Harbor," is now the author of a new book of poems published by Gotham House, Inc. at 66 Fifth Avenue. It is called "Down East" and interprets New England in many moods. We are glad that two of our notable New England poets are named Frost and Snow. What with the winter coming on, those names seem most satisfactory! . . .

Re our recent criticism of *Manuel Komroff's* "A New York Tempest" we print the following letter from *Thomas R. Coward,* President of Coward-McCann, Inc.:

> I can't agree with your criticism about the great fire. The author deliberately desired a slightly old-fashioned flavor, and "ripped full open" and "made itself shown" do not strike me in the horrible light they do you. Quite the contrary.
>
> Of course your later criticism concerned with the wall being broken down *in* one blow, and *conceded to* are quite in order and are evidences of careless editing.
>
> It is peculiarly regrettable because, beside myself, two other outside editors had worked over this manuscript, both of them singularly competent and filling positions of considerable responsibility. However, we shall all try to do better.

Mrs. Helen Serena Davis **of Orange City, Florida, writes us a recent delightful letter from which, alas! we can only quote in part.**

> **The extracts from Grandfather's Receipt Book, to which you gave nestroom recently, stirred me to look for odorous comparisons in "The Art of Cookery," written in 1745, by A LADY (*Mrs. Hannah Grasse*).**
>
> **Alas, they were altogether too odorous to be quoted legally! Even the Stag's Heart Water requires two quarts of the best white wine; and this appears to be a strictly temperance beverage compared with the others. Some titles show that, compared to Grandpa, the LADY was no temporance advocate.**
>
> **Perhaps the Victorian fainting-habit originated in the reign of George Second? The receipt for Histerical-water calls for two quarts of brandy; and even Treacle-water, which we supposed innocuous, requires two pounds of "old Canary wine." Page Mrs. Gaskell!**
>
> **As a token of regard for the Associate Phœnician, who takes care of us so nicely betimes, and for the Mermaids, I quote "An approved Method practised by Mrs. Dukely, the Queen's Tyre-Woman, to preserve Hair, and make it grow thick."**
>
> **Take one quart of white-wine, put in one handful of rosemary-flowers, half a pound of honey, distil them together; then add a quarter of a pint of oil of sweet-almonds, shake it very well together, put a little of it into a cup, warm it blood-warm, rub it well on your head, and comb it dry.**
>
> **Now, will some grateful baldhead repay me for that queen's magic, by telling me the name of the MAN, who in 1778 edited and greatly altered "The Art of Cookery" as written by a LADY in '45?**

Our friend *Arthur W. Bell* sends us from The Belfry, Falmouth, Massachusetts, the following poem by which he sets much store:

LACONIC BIOGRAPHY

Base born, forlorn;
Uncouth in youth;
A fool in school;
A lad thought bad;
By pluck, or luck,
Self made in trade;
First love, above,
A maid afraid;
Consoled, cajoled
To wed, instead,
A chit unfit
To bear an heir;
A life of strife;
True fate too late;
Brief bliss in this;
A free decree;
A bent, content;
A name and fame;
A trance in France;
Complete defeat:
Hard lines, declines
In wealth and health;
Some doubt about
The soul and goal;
A plod towards God,
Then home with "Rome":
Last stage, old age;
Choked breath, chill death;
Amen, what then!

Sax Rohmer, dear old *Fu Manchu,* is now with us! He is opening a series of radio dramas centering around his famous Chinese creation, out in Chicago. They are to be presented during the coming year over the Columbia Broadcasting system. And—wrrrrr!—little boys and girls, those are going to be considerable bedtime stories! . . .

cyril mipaas of "black stallion press" 36 east 58th street, new york (What *is* the advantage of no Caps, someone please tell us!) writes as follows:

> Your column indicates an interest in booksellers as well as the lay reader, and being a bookseller (for the past ten days) I have quite a tale to tell. Advice to the young bookseller would also be gratefully received and eagerly read. We decided that the world of finance called us in a louder voice than that of Alma Mater with her M. A., so embezzling our tuition fees, we hied ourselves off, borrowed some modernistic furniture, bought a book or two, rented a studio (a studio, mind you), and sat down to watch the shekels of silver roll in. They did not roll in, they trickled. Be that as it may, we were not ensconced more than three days when the liveliest assortment of freaks dropped in around our necks. Question: is it an unusual occurrence or merely a punishment for our foolhardiness?
>
> First came one who whispered to us that he was the scion (illegitimate) of a Great Name. He looked it. Could we advance him a little something on the strength of a manuscript he showed us? It was a History of Bastardy. Yes, we could advance him something. We advanced him to the door. Our next encounter was with a dowager, rather well dressed, who might have been beautiful at the time of the Great Blizzard. What she would have was a copy, unexpurgated, of "Fanny Hill," and, young man, it must have all the plates! Now I don't know the lady Miss Hill, but I hear she was quite naughty. What are we to do? What ARE we to do?
>
> They are still coming in, and they are definitely *not* cash customers. Dear editor, please advise! Frantically, etc.

Mr. Mipaas will probably find that such experiences are the lot of anyone who opens a "studio." Maybe it's that that's wrong with his Black Stallion, or maybe the name Black Stallion suggests to certain people a certain well-known silver stallion, and therefore the proximity of "Jurgen"; hence a flavor of naughtiness, entirely misconstrued. Mr. Mipaas, why don't you open an honest-to-God *bookstore?*—though that is certainly no assurance, from what we hear, that the shekels will roll in! If you are going in for publishing you are going to have an awful lot of competition on your hands—awful in several senses, to judge by the output of a number of the wee publishers. In any case we wish you success, and a happy issue out of all your afflictions!

THE PHŒNICIAN.

The Reader's Guide

(*Continued from page* 150)

century. Like many mystics he was somewhat uncritical, and published a good deal of blank verse. Some of the worst of it may be found in English anthologies."

THE Ouija problem has been settled by authority. *L. H., Saint David's, Pa.,* "with malicious joy at catching Mrs. Becker for once off guard," says that right there in the "Century Dictionary" is the word

> ouija (we'ya, in American use we' ja), n. (Formed as a trademark name, from F. *oui,* yes, plus G. *ja,* yes. The name thus implies "a thing that will answer *yes* in any language"—a good description of a well-managed planchette.)

The definition and a quotation showing use of the word follows. L. H. adds that the "New English Dictionary" assigns the invention of planchette to the year 1855, but does not condescend to mention ouija. Several other correspondents come to the rescue: *S. McC., Baltimore, Md.,* says: "Cease to be an Arab. Write to the maker and patentee of Ouija boards, W. A. Fulda, 1514 Hartford Avenue, Baltimore, who can, if he will, tell you all about them. Then will J. J., New York, be appeased." *W. J. W., New York,* speaks of the litigation over the trademark and adds: "J. J. might be able to trace the history of similar devices by an examination of the patents in Class 273, Sub-class 161: Fortune-telling Devices. Unfortunately patents arranged according to subject matter are only available in Washington."

L. H. C., New York, adds to the books on astronomy "The Friendly Stars" and "The Ways of the Planets," by Martha Evans Martin, saying "they are not new, so the science, which was accurate for the time, may be outmoded, but they certainly inspire a love of the subject and are most pleasant reading. I was in the country club last week and saw Saturn through a small telescope, then read what Mrs. Martin says about it. We were so interested that we arose in the early dawn to see Venus, extraordinarily brilliant just now in the Morning Star." Yes, so I discovered when I added a midocean dawn to my large, fine collection of sunrises, on the third day of September. It was the most grandiose affair ever I saw, with the most limpid Morning Star—and to give it the last touch, at the precisely perfect moment a school of porpoises came leaping out of the golden sea, curving black against the glow.

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